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The WHITE PINE SERIES OF Architectural Monographs

Volume X Number 1

THE OLD HILL TOWNS of WINDHAM COUNTY Connecticut

With Introductory Text by
Richard H. Dana, Jr.

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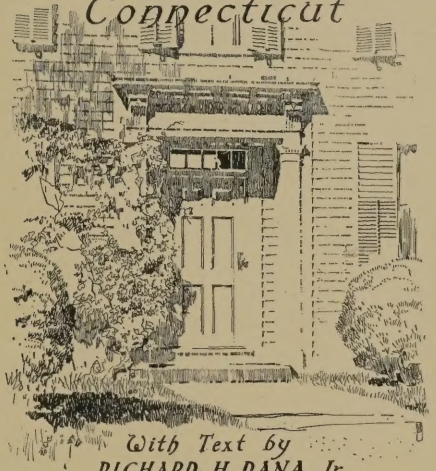
An Architectural MONOGRAPH on THE OLD HILL TOWNS of WINDHAM COUNTY Connecticut



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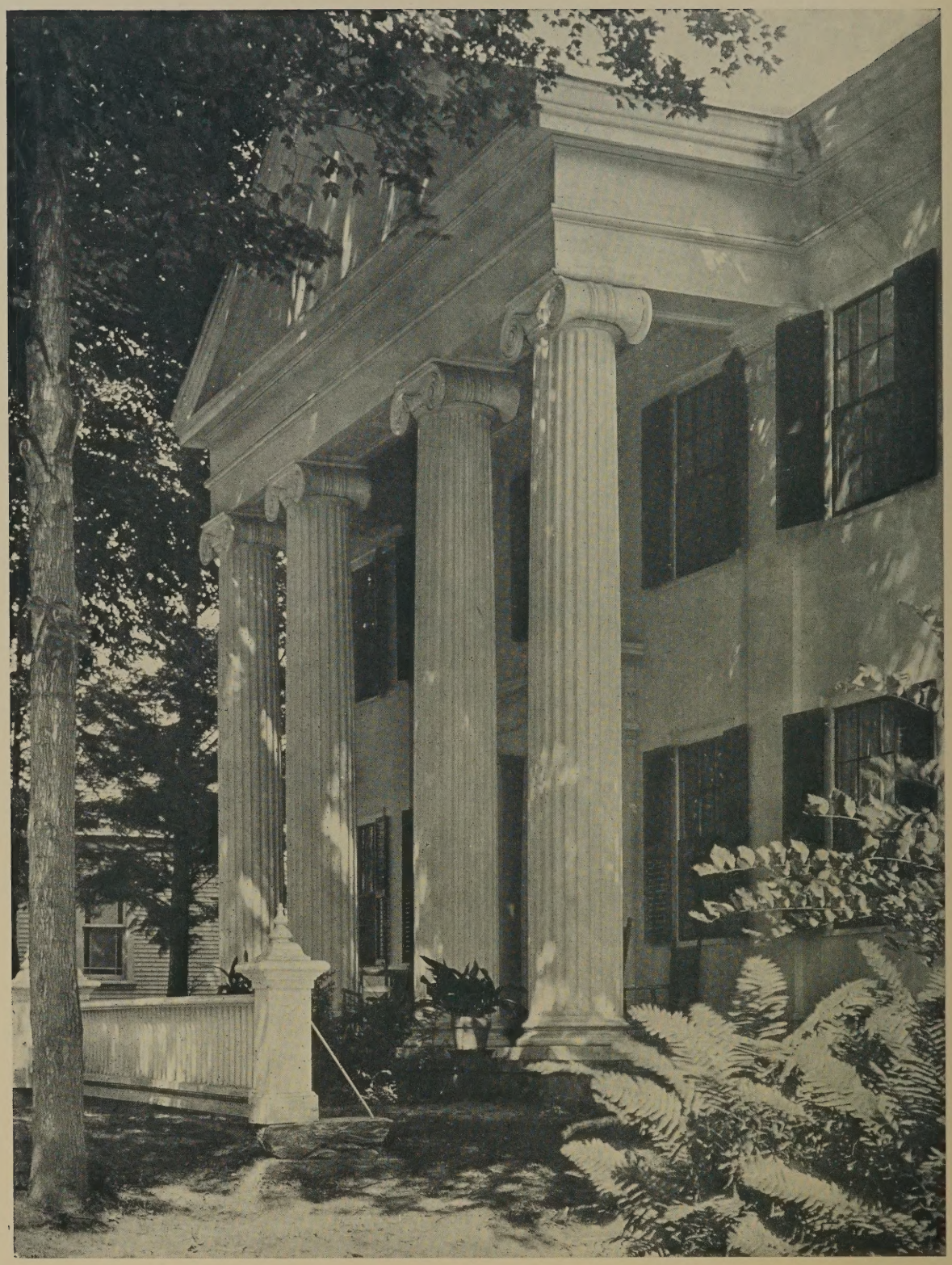


Detail of Portico

THE PERKINS HOUSE, WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT

Built in 1832

The WHITE PINE SERIES *of* ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPHS

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION
SUGGESTING THE ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE
AND ITS AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A
STRUCTURAL WOOD

VOLUME X 1924 NUMBER I

The Old Hill Towns *of* Windham County, Connecticut

By RICHARD H. DANA, Jr.

Photographs by Kenneth Clark

THE early settlers in the northeast corner of Connecticut—Windham County—located their towns on the hill-tops to secure greater safety from the Indians. They planned more wisely than they knew; for not only were their towns preserved from destruction by the Indians in the late 17th Century, but also from destruction by industrialism and Victorian prosperity in the late 19th Century. And, fortunately, the 20th Century knows enough to value and preserve them!

The first period in the history of these towns was a tale, many times retold, of hardship, struggle and endurance. The region was known as early as 1635, as it was on the direct route from the Massachusetts Bay Colony to the Connecticut River Settlements. This "hideous and trackless wilderness" was traversed by only the roughest sort of trail, known as the "Connecticut Path". * The first definite settlement of any kind within the county area was made in 1686, by thirty courageous families from Roxbury, Massachusetts, who toiled along the eighty miles of wild country to form a new community at "New Roxbury", which later became known as Woodstock. Settlers in other parts of the county came from Norwich, Connecticut, which lay several miles to the south of the present County line. All had the same trying experiences. Land purchases from the Indians were most uncertain. The English Governor of the Connecticut Colony added to this uncertainty by trying to appropriate all these purchases to the Crown, saying that the signature of an Indian was not worth more than a scratch of a bear's paw. The French and Indian War still further delayed settlements everywhere. Then came the clearing of the ground, building the houses and barns, disputes about boundaries and the difficult task of establishing a minister and raising a church in each remote settlement. However, before 1775 all this was fairly accomplished almost everywhere in the county.

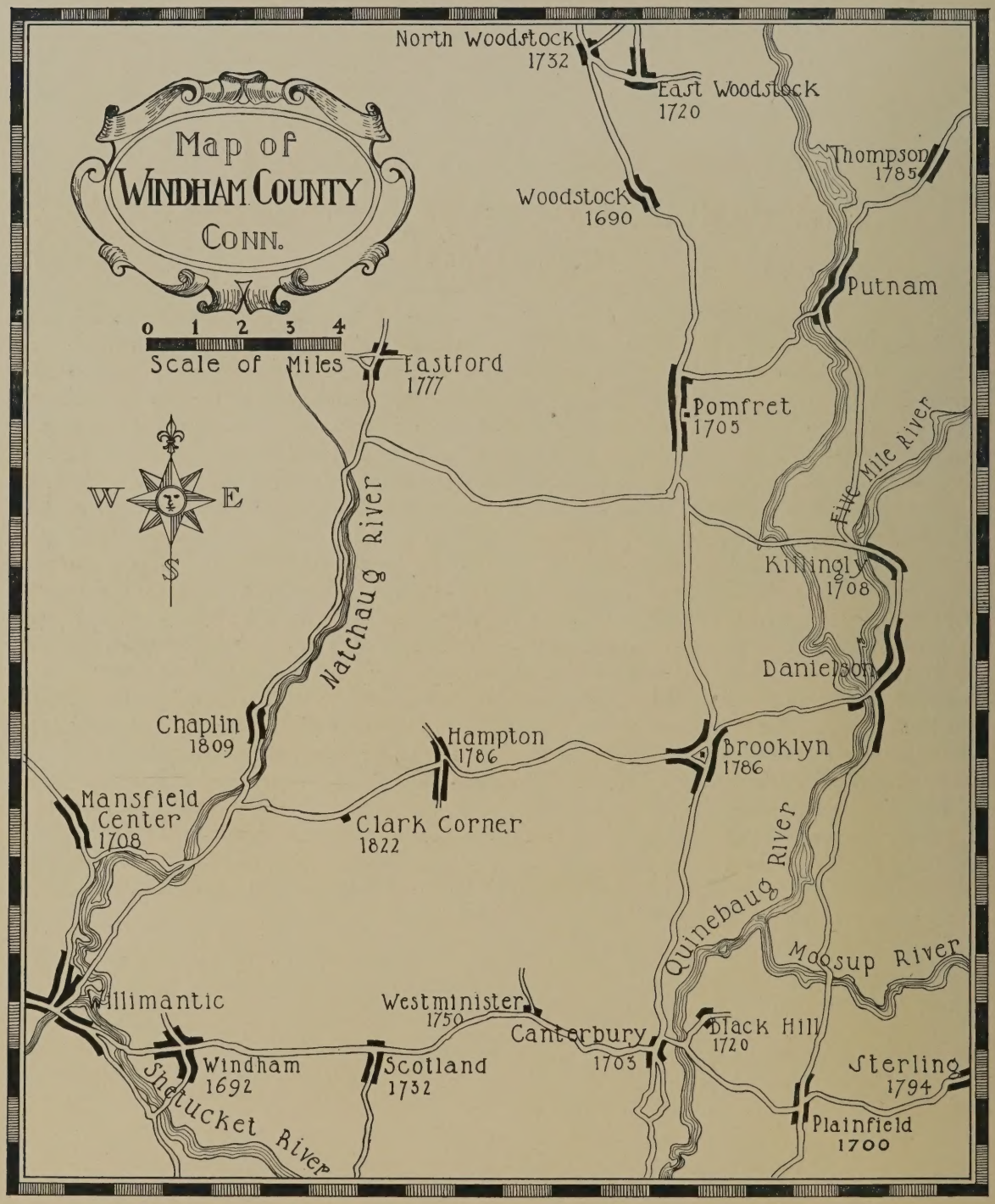
The second period, after the Revolution, was one of great prosperity throughout the county. Stage-coach roads were built up to these towns, no matter how steep or high or rough the hill. They were no longer isolated and remote. They were connected by high roads to Hartford, Providence, Norwich and the towns in Massachusetts. Stage-coach inns were opened and flourished in each town. Three of these inns are now open and still offer their hospitality all the year around; the Ben Grosvenor Inn at Pomfret, the Chelsea Inn at Hampton Hill and the Windham Inn at Windham. Their decorative old sign boards are still swinging in the breeze.

The third period came with the railroads and the building of factories in the last half of the 19th Century. The railroad naturally followed the rivers and valleys and several modern manufacturing towns sprang up along the Natchaug and Quinebaug Rivers. The old stage-coach lines were discontinued and the commerce with the outside world lapsed; so that the old hill towns again found themselves left high and dry. But, though this may have been a disappointment to a

* Note—See "History of Windham County" by E. D. Larned—1874.

few ambitious merchants in these towns, it proved to be a blessing in disguise. Well removed from the nearest railroad, they are preserved today as delightful residential villages, with all the charm and atmosphere of a hundred years ago.

Canterbury is the most appealing of the sixteen old towns in Windham County. It was considered important enough architecturally to have devoted to it the December 1923 issue of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs.*

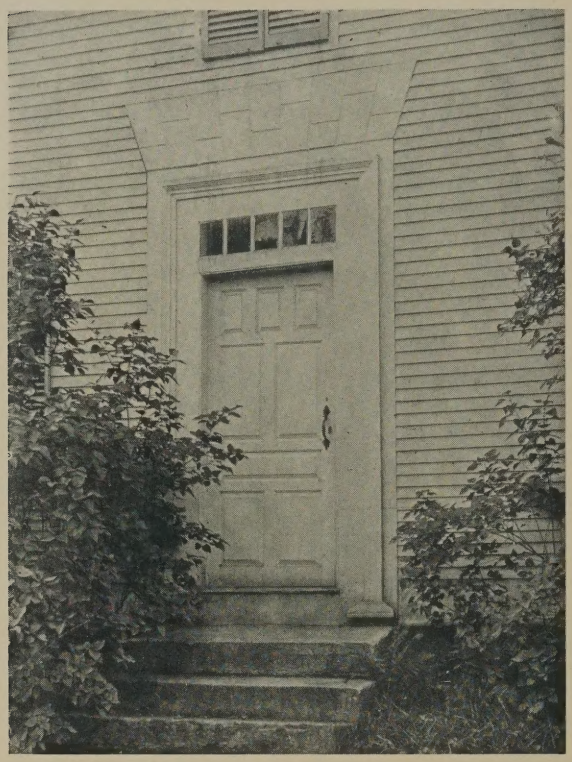


WINDHAM was settled in 1689 by sixteen gentlemen from Norwich. Its unusual advantages and proximity to Norwich attracted a superior class of citizens, men of character, position and public spirit. Windham Green soon increased in business and importance. Here were town clerk, constable, justices and leading men. There was much good fellowship among early settlers, feasting, merry-making and interchange of hospitalities. The young people remained at home, marrying mostly among their own townspeople, till, in the process of years, the whole population was knit together in one great family circle. In 1726 Windham was made shire town of the county. Though far to the southwest of the centre of the county, no one thought of disputing her claim. She had far outstripped her sister townships in population, wealth, cultivation and political influence. The first court of the County was held at Windham Green and soon after a court-house and jail were erected.

By 1750 social life was noted as exceedingly "hilarious and enjoyable"; "jaunting and junketing" were popular. Windham people were especially noted for their love of fun and frolic, bantering and jesting others. One joke was turned on them, however. Fear of the French and the Indians was still persisting, when on a very dark, sultry summer night, a roar and tumult filled the town. The people, perplexed and greatly frightened, stayed behind barred doors and listened with horror, no one venturing out to face the foe. Next morning it was discovered that it was only a migration through the town of noisy bull-frogs in search of water, their own pond having dried up. Much to the mortification of the Windham people, the story flew all over the county and the country.

THE WEBB HOUSE, WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT

Just south of the Green stands the old Webb House, which was built during the early days of Windham's settlement. The house has an unusual L-shaped plan, with two long fronts of equal



Side Door

THE WEBB HOUSE, WINDHAM, CONN.

length; one facing the main road and the other a side lane. There is a high Doric porch on the street front, reached by a long flight of steps which run parallel with the wall. A delicate diamond design railing is a feature of the porch. There is a wide front doorway with fluted pilasters and double doors of five panels each. The top panels are rounded. On the other façade there is a simple and very flat doorway, not, however, without architectural interest. A pleasing effect of substance and dignity is obtained by the unusually broad treatment of the frame. A moulded architrave of the usual width is separated from the door opening by a plain band seven inches wide and from the narrow clapboards by another plain band, making the total width of the frame eighteen inches. A deep flat arch of solid wood, carved to simulate stone quoins, springs from the outside corners of the frame. The flat arch feature is repeated over all the first floor windows.

The Perkins House, illustrated on the opposite page, was not built until 1832, but it is surely one of the very best examples of the type of domestic architecture which flourished in the United States during the period of the Classic Revival. The house as well as the portico has a broad pediment. The front is faced with tongued and grooved siding put on vertically, giving a flat serene background and forming a pleasing contrast to the fluted columns of the front portico. There are two chimneys on each end with the side walls between them covered with clapboards. The wing at the side is also clapboarded. The Ionic portico (frontispiece) is so consummately well proportioned that we are not surprised to find that the designer gave special study to the most advantageous manner of spacing the columns, to further the design as a whole. It will be seen by studying the front elevation that the central span is distinctly broader than the bays on each side of it, in order not to hide or "crowd" the unusually broad front doorway with its Doric columns "in antis" and side lights. This uneven spacing of the columns also gives an hospitable effect to the centre entrance, stability to the corners and a delightful rhythm to the whole portico.

East Porch

THE WEBB HOUSE, WINDHAM, CONN.

THE PERKINS HOUSE, WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT
Built in 1832

POMFRET AND VICINITY: Pomfret owes its origin to the courage of one Captain John Blackwell, an English Puritan, who had fled to America at the restoration of the Stuarts in 1687. He was in Woodstock in its time of peril and panic, caused by the Indian Wars, and rendered valuable service by going out on the "frontier" to what is now Pomfret and "standing his ground" against the enemy.

Mrs. John Grosvenor was among the settlers that straggled into Pomfret after the end of the Indian Wars in 1696. Her portion was the fairest part of the township, the upper part of the present village. Her grandson, Ebenezer Grosvenor, was the noted landlord of the Pomfret Tavern, a resort much frequented in the stirring times just before 1776 when rum and debate flowed with equal freedom.

Prosperous summer residents have modernized and enlarged almost all the simple old 18th Century houses that once lined Pomfret Street. None are left in their original state except the old Ben Grosvenor Inn, (shown on this page). Even this has modern additions, but these have been discreetly kept in the rear, so that the long line of the quaint two-story portico still graces the street as it did a hundred and fifty years ago. This shallow portico is only six feet wide, with a flat wood ceiling painted lavender blue. The posts are eighteen feet high but only eight inches square at the bottom, tapering to seven inches at the top, giving them a slender, naïve character.

Another two-story portico is found at the Colonel Lyons House at East Woodstock, a few miles north of Pomfret. Four slender and graceful Doric columns support a low pediment roof. A shallow balcony with a picket railing is suspended at the second floor level. The running diamond decoration below the cornice adds to the delicate refinement.

THE BEN GROSVENOR INN, POMFRET, CONNECTICUT

The most surprising and unusual house in the neighborhood is certainly "Squire Bosworth's Castle", at Eastford, (shown on the opposite page). Built by a wealthy and eccentric bachelor, the house shows much entertaining "individuality" without and within. Perched on a very high, steep hill above the town, the vertical effect is still further enhanced by a two-story monitor roof, containing a lodge room with a fireplace at each end. The interior is literally carved within an inch of its life, with fine scale and highly original motifs worthy of careful inspection.

THE COL. LYONS HOUSE, EAST WOODSTOCK, CONN.

"SQUIRE BOSWORTH'S CASTLE", EASTFORD, CONN.

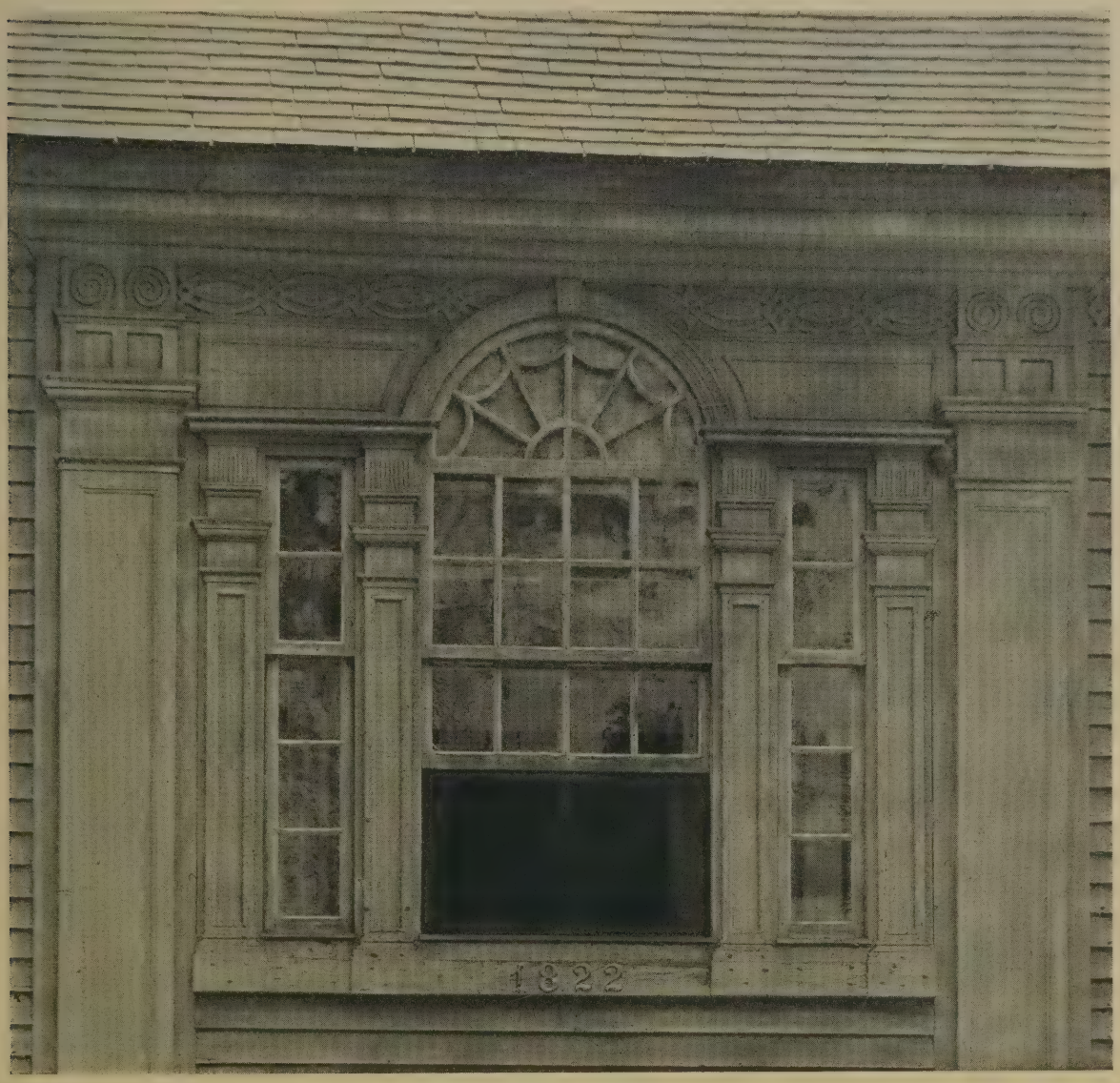
Detail of Entrance

Detail of Cupola

THE OLD TOWN HALL, BROOKLYN, CONNECTICUT

BROOKLYN: This pleasant hill town, built around a spacious square green, was not separated from its neighbors Pomfret and Canterbury until 1752. Colonel Godfrey Malbone, a wealthy English loyalist, came here at this time, having escaped from Newport, Rhode Island, where his luxurious home was destroyed by mobs. He soon started to build an Episcopal Church, a copy of Trinity Church, Newport. In the same year the Congregational Meeting-House was started in the centre of the Green. The two rival churches were completed about the same time. Soon after this came the Revolution, in which Israel Putnam of Brooklyn, won fame for himself and his home town at the Battle of Bunker Hill.

The old white meeting-house, with its very tall spire, still stands on the green, with not one graceful detail to relieve its frank austerity. A building more interesting to architects is the old Town Hall near by. One outstanding feature is the entrance doorway, with four Doric pilasters and frieze. The other feature is the square cupola on the roof ridge, with its curved roof, quaint finial and bracketed cornices.



Detail of Palladian Window

THE SNOW HOUSE, CHAPLIN, CONNECTICUT

CHAPLIN is the latest of the old towns to be founded, but by no means the least interesting. Its first permanent settler was Deacon Benjamin Chaplin, who, in 1740, went from Pomfret out into the "wilderness"—some ten miles to the southwest—took land on the Natchaug River and cleared himself a homestead. In 1747 he married the Widow Mary Ross and built a large and handsome mansion. It still stands, a monument to his success and known yet as the Old Chaplin House. Deacon Chaplin, a man of marked character, shrewd and far-sighted, foresaw the growth of the community that was to bear his name, and bought up much land at low figures, laid out farms, built houses and barns and ruled as the lord of the manor. Just why no church was built at the same time we do not know. Certain it is that Deacon Chaplin was a man of religious convictions, for, with a daughter on a pillion behind him to jump down to open intervening bars and gates, he was accustomed to ride six miles to attend church at South Mansfield. At his death, in 1795, he left a generous fund to found a church near his home "before January 1, 1812". Accordingly, a religious society, called after the Deacon, was founded by the farmers living in the neighborhood. But, due to various delays and disagreements, the church was not actually finished until 1820.

The present town of Chaplin extends along a main street, laid parallel with the river. The church is situated about midway of the street, on a slight rise of ground. Although the church itself is of no great architectural interest or merit, there are at least a dozen neighboring houses, rich in fine detail, that are very good examples of the 1820 period.

On each side of the church are twin houses, very similar to a third, the Hope House, at the north end of the town. All three are the two-chimney houses so frequently found in Windham County, with a pediment having a pitch of 30 degrees, enclosing a decorative fan window. The Hope House, the most interesting of the three

THE SNOW HOUSE, CHAPLIN, CONNECTICUT

Built in 1822

THE JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE, CLARK CORNER (NEAR CHAPLIN) CONNECTICUT
Built in 1827

Detail of Monitor

THE JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE, CLARK CORNER, CONNECTICUT

Built in 1827

THE HOPE HOUSE, CHAPLIN, CONNECTICUT
Built in 1808

is remarkable for its small size,—only 34 feet front by 24 feet in depth—and for its sophisticated and "finished" Georgian detail. An assured hand designed the two Doric pilasters on each corner with back boards and triglyphs, and its influence is also manifest in the mutuled cornice with conspicuously beaded bed moulding.

The Snow House, having a hipped roof and a two story central motive, set off by two tall pilasters, is not typically representative of Chaplin tradition, but it is none the less interesting. The recessed porch is unusual and surprisingly pleasing and "convincing". The details of its treatment are worthy of careful study. The detail of the well proportioned Palladian window above it and the finely carved frieze below the main cornice (shown on page eleven) are also worthy of scrutiny.

The Jonathan Clark House, at Clark Corner, several miles to the south, belongs architecturally to the Chaplin tradition, (see page thirteen). Jonathan Clark was a civil engineer and surveyor for more than fifty years. That his experience in the line of his profession, together with the fact that he was also a master-builder, was of great value to him in laying out and planning his house, is evident. It was built in 1827, almost entirely by himself, and upon it he lavished many and intricate forms of ornamentation. In fact, it outdoes all the Chaplin houses in profusion of fine detail. It has the typical tall Doric pilasters and cornice of the Hope House. But, its unique feature is the high and dominating monitor on top of the hipped roof, crowned with a very rich frieze, cornice and latticed railing, (see detail on opposite page). The broad recessed doorway, with double pilasters, is in pleasing harmony with the quiet breadth of the front. The wood picket fence, enclosing the dooryard garden, is especially light and agreeable, the round pickets only one inch in diameter, with iron gates to match the pattern of the wood, but even lighter in scale.

THE "PENNY" LINCOLN HOUSE, SCOTLAND, CONNECTICUT
Built in 1835

There are other 18th Century farmhouses in Windham County, scattered sparsely beyond the village greens. They are plainer and perhaps less interesting architecturally than the more prosperous and decorated houses in the towns. There is, however, a definite type found in this county that is exemplified by the "Penny" Lincoln House at Scotland, illustrated above. This two-chimney type is as characteristic of Northeastern Connecticut as the one-central-chimney type is typical of Central and Western Connecticut. The plan consists of four rooms (each about 12 ft. x 18 ft.), two on each side of a central hall, and separated by the large chimneys and deep flanking closets. One of the outer closets is often used as a vestibule to the side door. There are overhanging gable ends, but no overhangs elsewhere. There are five windows across the fronts, which are approximately forty feet in length, but only two windows across the ends, which are approximately thirty feet deep, giving a pleasing contrast of much glass in front and much clapboarding at the ends. Altogether, this type is a stirring example of taste and good proportions, unadorned and needing no adornment.

Whether one prefers the simpler or the more decorated type of house, or one is more sympathetic to the 18th Century or early 19th Century type, there are many examples throughout this corner county of Connecticut which remain unspoiled and which are of real architectural interest and appeal.

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SERIES OF

Architectural Monographs

Volume 10 *Number* 2

Early American ORNAMENTAL CORNICES

BY

Aymar Embury II

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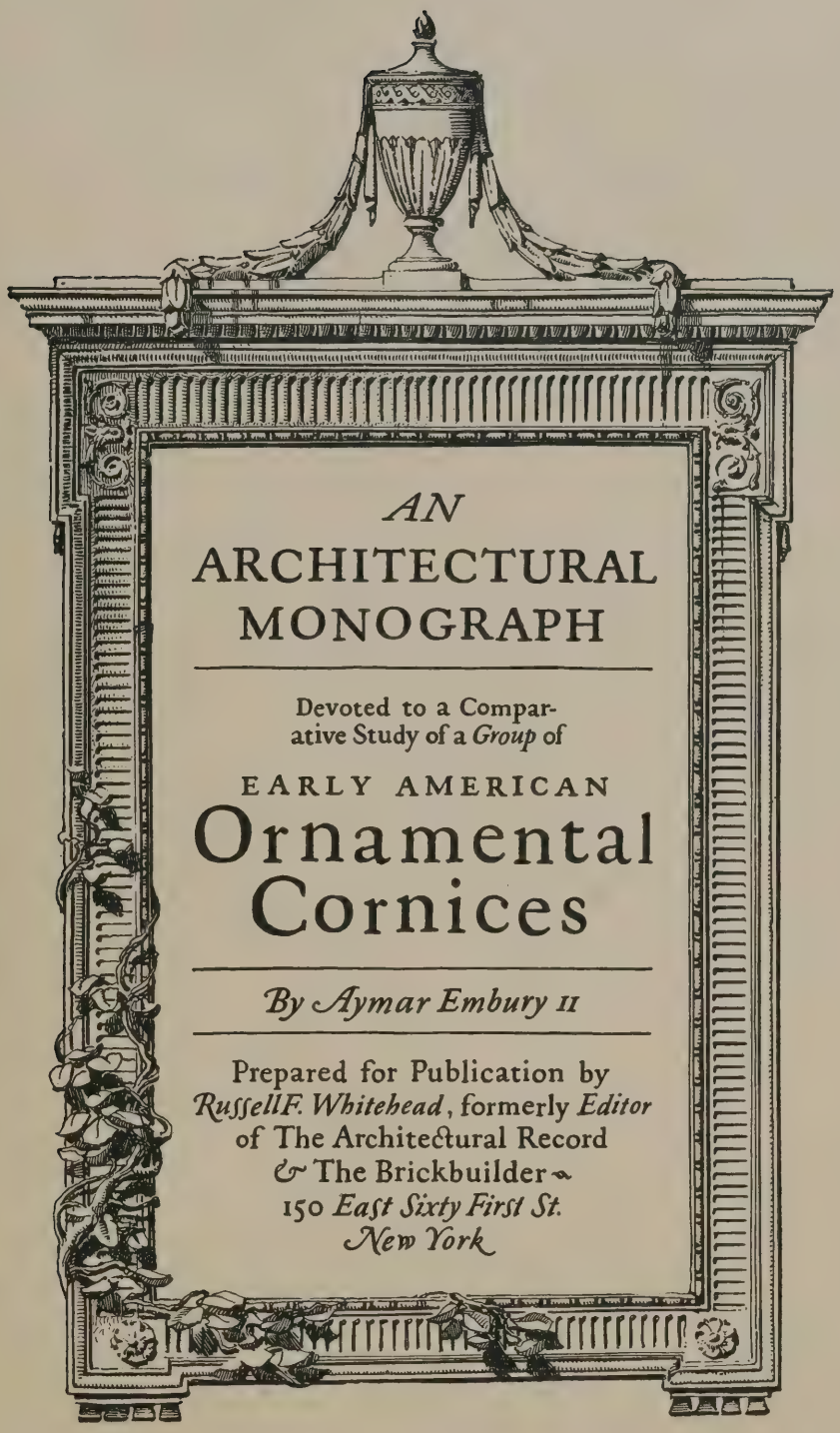

AN

ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPH

Devoted to a Comparative Study of a *Group* of

EARLY AMERICAN

Ornamental Cornices

By Aymar Embury II

Prepared for Publication by
Russell F. Whitehead, formerly *Editor*
of The Architectural Record
& The Brickbuilder
150 *East Sixty First St.*
New York

Detail of Cornice
THE BACON HOUSE, KENT, CONNECTICUT
Built in 1810

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VOLUME X 1924 NUMBER 2

A Comparative Study of a Group of
Early American Ornamental Cornices

Part One

By AYMAR EMBURY, II

Photographs by KENNETH CLARK

"CORNICE—*A large moulding which forms the coping of a facade or portion of a facade,—or surmounts a door, window, dresser, etc.*"—ADELINE'S ART DICTIONARY.

This is one definition of a cornice; it is *not necessarily* part of an entablature copied from Vignola.

THE early American house was in nine cases out of ten a square box-like structure of clapboards or plain shingles with a decorative doorway and an ornamental cornice as the sole relieving features of a design otherwise simple to the point of meagerness. On the remaining tenth of the houses, the most usual additional decoration was the superposition of small cornice-like heads to the windows, which tended only slightly to distinguish these houses from those with plain window trims; and the houses in which the whole facade was consciously "designed" constitute an incredibly small minority of the whole group. A cursory examination of the back files of "*The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs*" will not confirm this statement, but anyone familiar with the parts of the country from which the examples illustrated have been culled, will realize that the editor has missed few houses which contain something of particular individuality, while he has foregone photographing many houses of excellent design, the publication of which would be of interest only as records, and to the architect would be a needless repetition.

Even within such narrow limits of design as were set for the colonial architects by their materials, the general poverty of the country, and the lack of training of the architects themselves, they managed to achieve a surprising variety in their houses, a variety evidently only capable of accomplishment by slight changes in the proportions of the masses of the buildings, and by the use of different decorative motives in the design of the two focal points of interest, the doorways and the cornices. That they were not without originality is amply proved by the amazing number of different solutions that they were able to discover, and this in spite of the fact that their design was *always* based on classic motives as interpreted by the Renaissance architects, and not (as at present) modified by knowledge of practically all historic styles. In part their freedom from the dominance of the dead hand of Vignola was certainly due to sheer ignorance; ignorance not so much of books, as of the fundamentals of architectural drawing which would enable them correctly to understand the illustrations, a fact which is amply proved by the many cases where the builder obviously tried to imitate drawings and failed in the same way that an ignorant contractor to-day fails to understand the meaning of detail sheets. Examine for example the cornice illustrated in Figure 1 in which the general form of the Greek Doric order is approximately imitated, although no portion of it (and especially the triglyphs) is either clearly comprehended or correctly executed.

Figure 1—*Cornice Detail of Entrance Porch*
POST ROAD TAVERN, WESTMINSTER, CONNECTICUT

Ignorance however, was but one and probably not the dominant factor in producing such free design; the Colonial architect was rather part of an architectural period than a copyist or interpreter of a past period, and was therefore totally unconscious of the need of consistency (if such need exists) which constantly hampers our modern designer; he never ran back to his collections of illustrations to see if others had done before him what he wanted to do; he probably had a certain amount of respect for precedent, but it was for precedent from which he could develop new motives, and not precedent as a storehouse containing all useful architectural motives.

Figure 2—*Detail of Gable End*
THE CAPEN HOUSE, TOPSFIELD, MASS.

The earliest form of cornice in America was really not classic at all, (Fig. 2) but derived from the English cottage, with which it was contemporaneous, and the plain treatment of the eaves (it can hardly be called a cornice) was continuously in use in very cheap work especially in the country districts, where either lack of funds or lack of technical skill in the carpenter made a built up, molded and decorated cornice impossible. This treatment persisted throughout colonial times, as is illustrated by the Hempstead house at New London, Connecticut (Fig. 3) and the Webb House at Orient, Long Island (Fig. 4) built more than one hundred and fifty years apart; and today in small, cheap work in the outlying districts we find precisely the same method of terminating a roof, used for the same reasons.

Figure 3—*Detail of Cornice*
THE HEMPSTEAD HOUSE, NEW LONDON, CONN.

Aside from houses with these overhangs, practically every house built before, let us say 1790 had a cornice of strictly classic genesis of not much originality and in itself of little interest however excellent it may have been as a crowning motive. These cornices, (and detail in general) closely followed English motives, or rather English adaptations of classic motives, slightly decreased in scale as befitted the material, and as a rule pretty well proportioned to the masses of the buildings. Where mistakes in scale occur they are usually in the direction of overscale rather than the reverse, due perhaps to imperfect digestion of the English precedent, and failure to realize that the proportion of cornice to wall should be determined by the material and general scale of the surface as well as by height. From the earlier cornices we have little to learn which is not in Vignola; examine the Vernon house at Newport, Rhode Island built in 1758 (Fig. 6) and the Burbank house at Suffield, Con-

necticut built in 1736 (Fig.7) and it will be seen that we have in both cases typical classic cornices with consols, in one case with a dentil course below. There is no motive not ordinarily found in England at the same time, and while these whole cornices may be admirable crowning motives of the wall, they have no particular reason for illustration except as they explain the progress of the style.

Figure 4—*Detail of Cornice*
THE WEBB HOUSE, ORIENT, LONG ISLAND

On the other hand the Shirley-Eustace house at Roxbury, Massachusetts built about 1750 (Fig. 5) has a very distinct character of its own. The corona is entirely absent, the soffit beginning under the bead at the bottom of the cymatium; practically all the bed moldings are decorated with combinations of historic motives as unexpected and curious as they are pleasing; and although an entablature would seem to be required by the use of pilasters against the wall, the frieze is entirely absent and the architrave suggested only over the pilasters with no corresponding breaks in the cornice or even the bed molds. The designer evidently had an idea which he did not quite know how to execute, but naïve as it is, it is nevertheless far more interesting than the correct cornices shown on pages 8 and 9.

When we come to examine the cornices of houses built after 1790 we find that the genuinely classic cornice is as rare as it was common in earlier times. A simple succession of run moldings continued to make up the crowning motive of the plainer and cheaper houses, but on the larger and more ornate there was no limit to the play of fancy, or rather there was no limit within the means of execution by ordinary carpenters' tools.

It must be remembered in studying colonial work that there were no power planes—all run moldings were got out by hand—there were few capable wood carvers, and composition ornament for outside work was unknown. The tools with which the ornaments were executed were few and simple, but the extraordinary variety of designs which were executed, with gouges and molding planes and especially with augers is amazing. Ornament sawn out with key-hole saws or turned on a lathe and applied to the surface of the boards is not infrequently found, especially in later work but ornament which could be done by a multiple molding plane and finished by a chisel or a gouge is by far the commonest, is perhaps the most ingenuously used, and is usually the best in scale with the light and graceful cornices of the period.

Now while the discussion of the sources of American design applies to all portions of the buildings, it is of especial force as regards the cornice, since as the use of cornices as methods of ornamentation became more and more extended, not only was the intersection of the roof and the wall treated with a cornice, but the doors, the window-heads, porches, rooms, mantels, mirrors and even cupboards, were terminated by cornices of distinctly architectural character, and with little difference in the types employed. A cupboard cornice and the main cornice of a house differed in scale but not in character, and at the end of the century this was not the solemn dignity of classic design, but the free and playful translation of the cabinet-maker; the one difference being that in furniture vari-colored wood inlays

Figure 5—*Detail of Cornice*
THE SHIRLEY-EUSTACE HOUSE, ROXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Figure 6—*Detail of Cornice*
THE VERNON HOUSE, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
Built in 1758

Figure 7—*Detail of Cornice*

THE CAPTAIN ABRAHAM BURBANK HOUSE, SUFFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Built in 1736

were often used to simulate flutes, wreathes or rosettes while the architectural ornament was always in relief.

The peculiar furniture-like cornice is as apparent in the books as in the executed work; and apparently the writers felt that no distinction was necessary between cornices used for various purposes, since page after page of cornices are shown, the accompanying descriptive text giving no hint as to the portions of the building to which the authors thought them most appropriate; and in other pages where designs for mantels, doorways and houses are shown, the cornices are shown blocked out only, with the instruction that whatever cornice is most pleasing in the preceding pages may be used.

Drawn, as they were, from such sources, by men technically not very skillful but with what was apparently a genuine feeling for detail, we find results which are elsewhere and at other times unequalled. Take for example the house at Chatham Center, New York built in 1798 (Fig. 9). This is not by any means the best designed cornice of the lot, and though not especially selected, will serve excellently to illustrate the points above made. Its genesis is to be found in the Doric, but it has come a long way from its original. The pilaster on the corner has reeds instead of flutes; and the reeds have no proper termination, they merely butt in to the neck mold, which, by the way, most of us would consider not only a poor choice of molding but out of scale as well. The cap of the pilaster does not support the architrave but returns on itself against

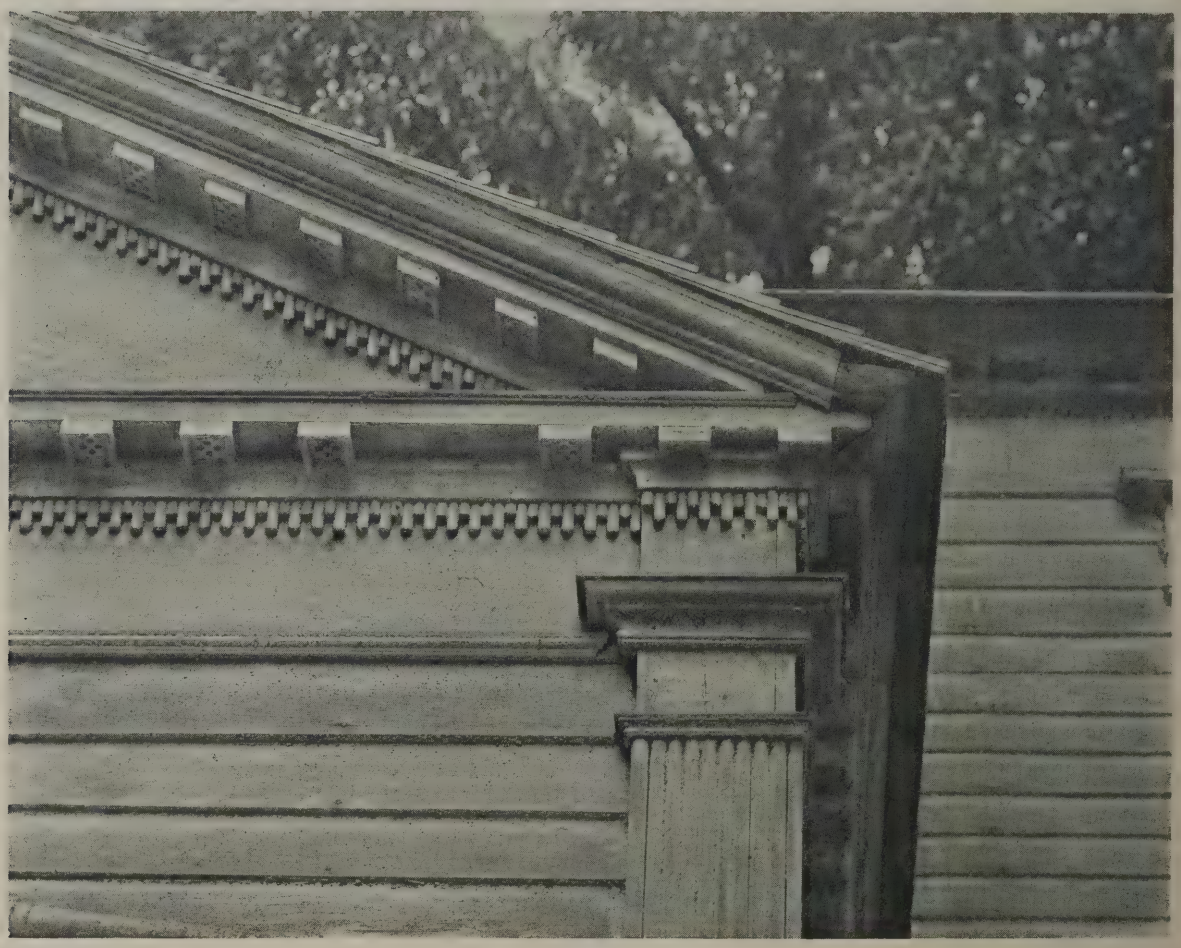

Figure 9—*Detail of Cornice*
A HOUSE AT CHATHAM CENTER, NEW YORK

Figure 10—*Detail of Cornice*
THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, EAST CANAAN, CONNECTICUT

the frieze, and the molding which acts as architrave lines up with the bottom of the cap, yet does not intersect with it, and returns on itself as does the cap. Since the architrave is much smaller than the cap, the frieze is shorter at the corners than between the pilasters. The cornice itself is not far from certain classic examples, although the mutules are under-nourished, and the guttae supposedly proper to the order are replaced by six round holes bored in the soffit in an ornamental pattern. The turning of the corner between the rake of the gable and the horizontal, always difficult, is here most awkwardly managed; really it is not managed at all. And what shall we say of the row of dentils like drops below the bed mold? Is this part of the cornice or a decoration to the frieze? Altogether it is a most amateurish piece of work, and yet one which shows a sensitive feeling for moldings, and a nice appreciation of the function of the cornice as a decorative band rather than a structural feature.

An entirely similar criticism can be made of the cornice of the Congregational Church at East Canaan, Connecticut (Fig. 10.) The pilaster projects too far, and the entablature above shows no classic articulation; architrave, frieze and cornice are jumbled together so that it is practically impossible to describe portions of it as belonging to any one of the three. The corona is lacking, the fillet below the cymatium serves as corona, and the soffit is not countersunk; but the whole composition is a sound design for the crown motive of a rather important building.

Figure 11—*Detail of Cornice*
A HOUSE AT EAST MARION, LONG ISLAND

The colonial designers seem to have been quite

Figure 12—*Angle View*
THE GENERAL STRONG HOUSE, VERGENNES, VERMONT

strongly impressed with the value of recurring decorative motives as opposed to continuous decoration on the frieze, and we find very many cornices either with or without mutules, which have decorations on their friezes derived from the triglyph. In the example last referred to (Fig. 10) the principal ornament is a series of lozenge shaped pieces of wood counter-sunk in the frieze, and separated by sets of five upright reeds; this is certainly very reminiscent of the triglyph and metope, although the spacing of the ornament bears no relation to the spacing of the mutules. In the frieze of the house at East Marion, Long Island (Fig. 11) the triglyphs are represented by reeded pieces of board spaced on centers *between* the mutules; and these pseudo triglyphs do not extend the full height of the frieze to rest on the architrave, but are pendant from the bed mold. The treatment of the frieze of the house at Vergennes, Vermont (Fig. 12) is similar, but perhaps a little better done, as is natural in a house built about 1820. Although it does appear somewhat out of place in a cornice of such mannered proportions as those of the Vergennes house. The contrast is especially bad between the series of black and whites of the row of consoles, the lesser row of dentils and the triglyphs. The triglyphs (which should be most important) are out of scale and insignificant by reason of their small size and lack of depth. In the "King Caesar" house at Duxbury, Mass., built in 1794, (Fig. 13) triglyphs are suggested by sets of three deep grooves cut in the lowest of the bed molds. This photograph shows another very characteristic and curious ornamental form which appears often in the cornices of the time: the rope ornament bed mold with auger holes bored in patterns, so that one hardly knows whether the designer intended to simulate leaves or rope. Perhaps he did not know himself, but at least he succeeded in producing a "color" of surface that is unique. The ornament is not altogether pleasant in such large

Figure 13 —*Detail of Cornice*
"KING CAESAR" HOUSE, DUXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS
Built in 1794

Figure 14—*Detail of Cornice*
THE CHURCH AT SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

Figure 15—*Detail of Cornice*
A HOUSE AT EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

quantities, as in the church at South Hadley, Massachusetts, (Fig. 14) where it is used not only as a principal bed mold, but also as the crown mold of the Doric cap, much as leaf ornament was used by the Italian architects of the Renaissance.

The same general type of ornament is used in the house at East Hartford, Connecticut (Fig. 15) but the placing of the auger holes has given this a distinctly leaf-like quality; and immediately below it we have a dentil course composed of guttae, which is not unusual at this period when the dentil course was a favorite motive and rarely used in its original form.

This concludes the list of motives to be discussed in this issue; it was originally the intention of the editor to treat the subject of ornamental cornices in a single number, but so many interesting variations of the simple motives were found, that it became necessary to continue the subject through another Monograph. In Part Two will be discussed other ornamental motives commonly used by our early designers, as well as a further consideration of the probable sources from which they borrowed. We know far too little both of these sources and of the men who worked from them; there is no full and authentic record of the training of any American architect before Bulfinch, and what we know of him would lead us to believe that his training was far more complete than that of most of his contemporaries—a deduction borne out by the fact that his work is more classic and more mannered than that of other men of his time. Yet what he gained in knowledge he seems to have lost in freedom, for while his buildings excell other early work, both in proportion and in scale, somehow they lack the interest in detail which the less knowing carpenter-architects, who were responsible for most of the cornices shown in these illustrations, imparted to their work.

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SERIES OF

Architectural Monographs

Volume 10 *Number* 3

Early American ORNAMENTAL CORNICES

PART II

BY

Aymar Embury II

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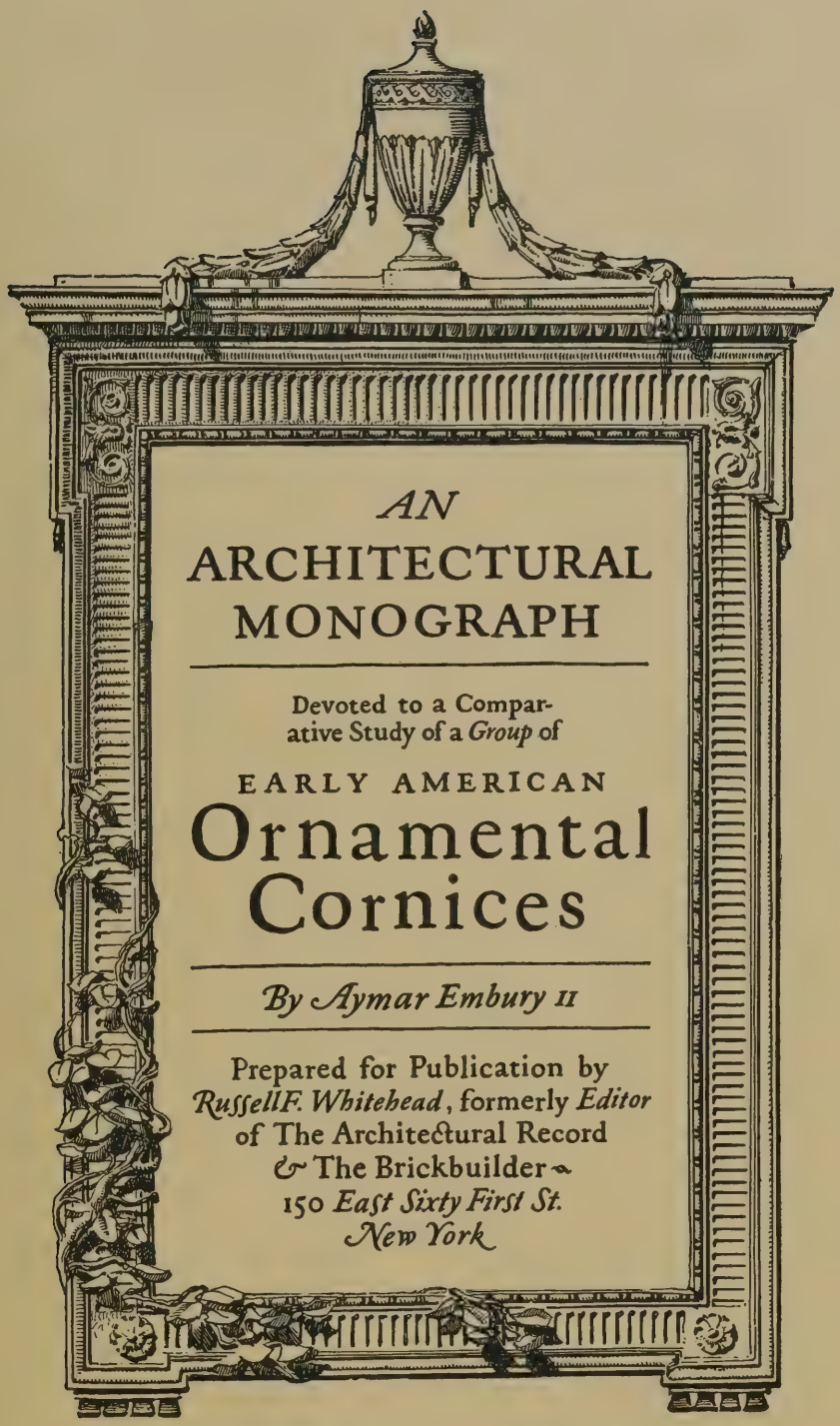


AN

ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPH

Devoted to a Comparative Study of a *Group* of

EARLY AMERICAN

Ornamental Cornices

By Aymar Embury II

Prepared for Publication by
Russell F. Whitehead, formerly *Editor*
of The Architectural Record
& The Brickbuilder
150 *East Sixty First St.*
New York

Figure 16—*Detail of Cornice—Built in* 1803

THE CABOT-CHURCHILL HOUSE, BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

The eagles, one poised over each corner, were carved out of White Pine, according to tradition, by sailors of the intrepid "Yankee" of which Capt. Churchill was Master

The WHITE PINE SERIES of ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPHS

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION
SUGGESTING THE ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE
AND ITS AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A
STRUCTURAL WOOD

VOLUME X 1924 NUMBER 3

A Comparative Study of a Group of
Early American Ornamental Cornices

Part Two

By AYMAR EMBURY, II

Photographs by KENNETH CLARK

IN the preceding Monograph on Early American Ornamental Cornices, were discussed the types of design and the methods of ornament used by our designers previous to the beginning of the nineteenth century, not because the year 1800 is a date easy to remember, but because at about that time there was a very marked change in the character of the work. The Classic Revival began to make its influence felt in the country, and the light and graceful architecture which we justly call "Colonial," regardless of its date, passed out of existence, to make way for the mannered style of the early nineteenth century. The origin of the ornament used in the Classic Revival work is for the most part as obvious as that of the Colonial is obscure; the similarity of many of the motives to the work of the Adam brothers in England was early noted and much commented upon; yet it seems doubtful if they had any direct influence so early as 1790 in the country districts of the United States, since their work had only become popular about 1770 and from 1775 until 1783 the Revolutionary War had been fought. It is more probable that just as the Adam work was an expression of the quality of architectural thought of the day, so was the corresponding work in America. One thing we can be certain of; that neither the work of the Adams, nor of any other English architect, compared with the early American in the beauty and delicacy of the run mouldings at this time. In England they continued to use the old repertoire, cyma and cyma reversa, ovolo and cavetto, mostly composed of arcs of circles, while here, working in wood, our designers produced moldings airy and graceful, often without mathematical curves, resembling sometimes the Gothic, sometimes the Greek, and sometimes those of no other period, but exquisitely adapted to the material, and to the free, almost bizarre, ornament with which they were combined.

One probable source to which the American builder-architect resorted for motives was unquestionably furniture, either in the executed pieces, or in the catalogs of the various English manufactures; and with furniture must be included mantels, since these were often made by furniture factories and illustrations of them were included in the catalogs. There was at that time a rather curious condition in England; furniture design had long borrowed motives from architecture and much early furniture was designed by architects, but during the latter half of the eighteenth century men who began their careers as cabinet makers became architects, and in the design of houses we find many motives obviously borrowed from furniture design. It is likely then that occasional American architects closely in touch with English work, derived the new motives which suddenly appeared toward the close of the century from English furniture books, and it is likewise probable that the American

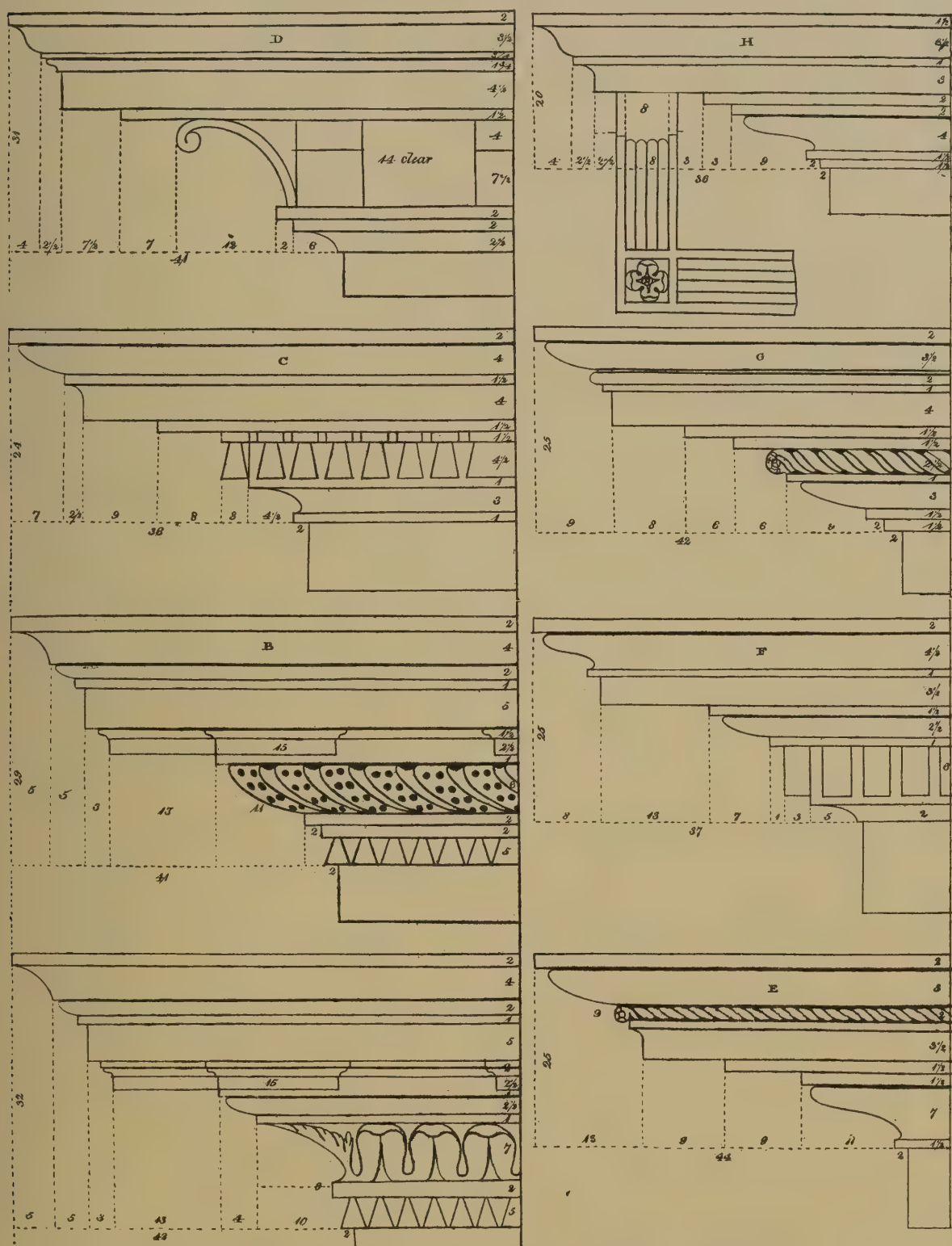
compilers of architectural books, men like Pain and Asher Benjamin, copied or at least freely transcribed from them. As the Adam brothers were the authors of books on furniture and architectural design, it is quite possible that they influenced American work to an extent that is not realized, by this indirect method, but the date of their publications and work, would seem to indicate that it was rather the books of earlier men that were most used and most useful.

There was another and important factor, and that was the most admirable library possessed by most Colonial builders. This may have been but a single volume, and was probably never more than three or four, but such books as "*Palladio Londiniensis*," Pain's "*House Carpenter*" and Benjamin's "*Country Builder's Assistant*," do not exist today. They contained literally all that the Colonial architect needed to know, and what library is there today which gives that and no more? We have too many books, so that our instinctive feeling for design is obscured or thwarted by our conflicting knowledges. The Colonial architect found himself in one strong current of design, easy to swim in because he swam with the current, not across or against it, and because he was powerfully guided and supported by his books; whereas we are directed by our libraries now across and now against the stream, and alas, we not infrequently sink, weighted down by our useless information.

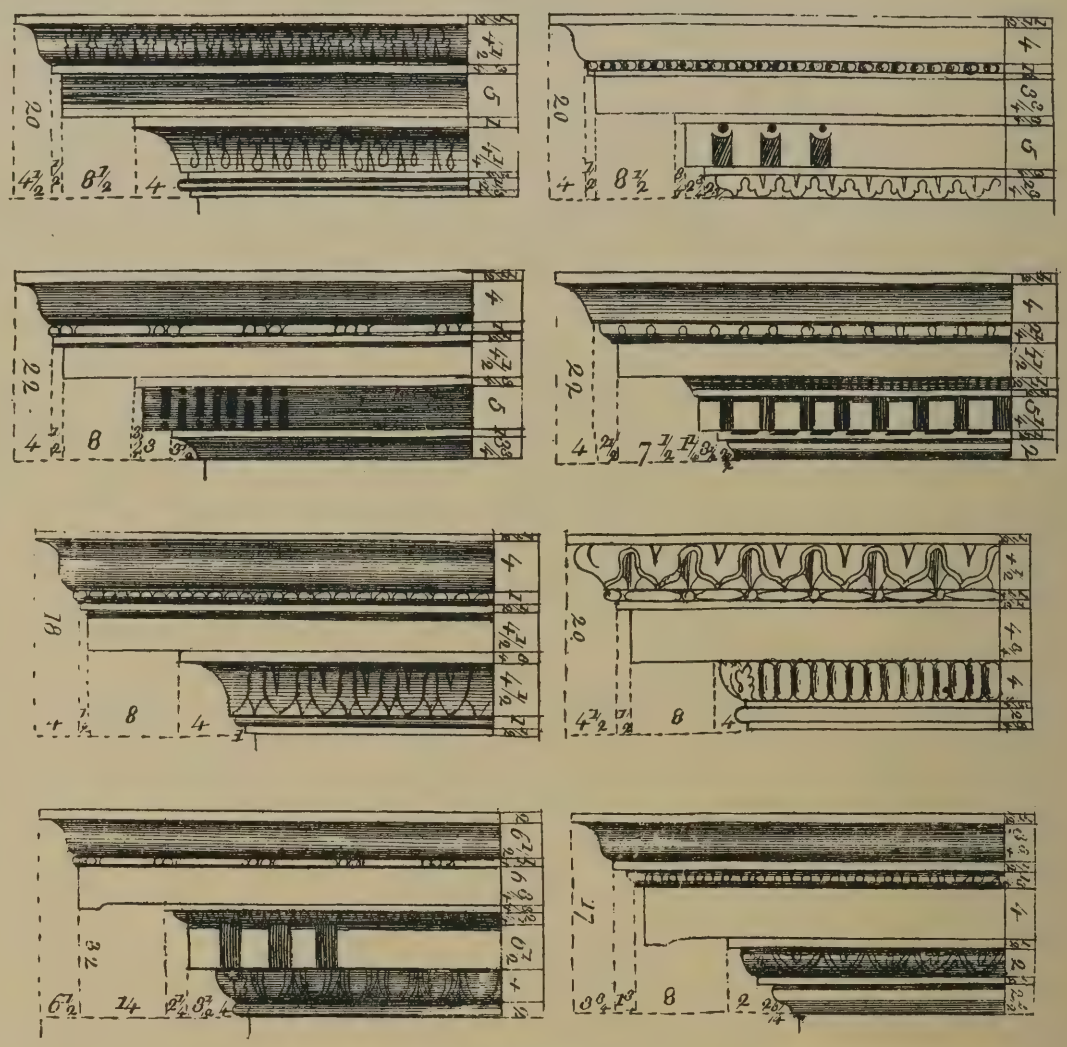
Too high praise cannot be given these colonial books; it is true that not all decorative motives in our early American work are direct copies of plates in them, but it is obvious that with their publication toward the end of the eighteenth century there was an immediate and enormous increase in the number of motives commonly employed, in the use of ornamented moldings and decorated friezes, and in a sort of general release from the genuine (though degraded) classic succession of moldings. It will thus be found that the most interesting of the so-called colonial houses, especially in their detail, date from the years immediately succeeding the Revolution, and before the publication of the archaeological books on Roman and Greek work, like Stuart and Revett's "*Antiquities of Athens*." Asher Benjamin and Daniel Raynerd's book, "*The American Builder's Companion; or, a NEW SYSTEM OF ARCHITECTURE; Particularly Adapted to The Present Style of Building in The United States of America*" was published in 1806. In the preface the authors state, "Being the first who have for a great length of time published any New System of Architecture, we do not expect to escape some degree of censure. Old-fashioned workmen, who have for many years followed the footsteps of Palladio and Langley, will, no doubt, leave their old path with great reluctance ...We do not conceive it essentially necessary to adhere exactly to any particular order, provided the proportion and harmony of the parts be carefully preserved. If, for instance in any of the cornices an ovolo should be changed for an ogee, or for a hollow, so trifling an alteration could not destroy the effect of the whole, provided it were done with any degree of judgment." A plate made from drawings by Benjamin to illustrate this book is reproduced on the page opposite.

American artisans shone by comparison with those of other countries, in that they were so free from tradition that they dared to depart from the stereotyped. Figure 17 shows the cornices of the main house, the window and the porch of the Bacon House at Kent, Connecticut, built in 1810, in all of which dentil courses and consols appear. The porch seems to have been added rather late, since the consols have degenerated into one board set upon another, instead of the molded solid blocks of the older work, while the porch dentils are merely small oblong blocks nailed to the frieze, without intermediate pieces. The same type of dentils are used on the main cornice, the windows and the door and show how interestingly the early builders could vary a motive which had been in use so long as to seem almost impervious to change. The short portion of the frieze is most unusual and well designed for its purpose, the vertical applied members being obviously derived from the triglyph, while the half round between them may be reminiscent of the swag. The native sense of design was usually sufficiently acute to keep the artisans within the bounds of the appropriate.

The dentil course was a favorite motive, but rarely used in its original form. Sometimes it was composed of guttae as in Figure 18, often it be-



Reproduction of Plate 12—"*The American Builder's Companion*"
By Asher Benjamin. Published at Boston in 1806



EXPLANATION OF PLATE LIV.

TO proportion the cornice and frize to rooms, or any place required ; give them three fourths of an inch to a foot, including the frize and necking ; ſuppoſe them to be fourteen feet, more or leſs ; at fourteen feet the cornice and frize, including the necking, will be $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches ; divide that into 12 parts, give 5 to the cornice, 6 to the frize, and one to the necking ; if cornices are uſed without frize or necking, give them three eighths of an inch to a foot, or half an inch to a foot ; ſuppoſe 14 feet as before, at three eighths of an inch to a foot, the cornice will be $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches : at half an inch to the foot, the cornice will be 7 inches ; whatever the given height is, that muſt be divided into the ſame number of parts as the cornice you make uſe of, and diſpoſe them to the parts in height and projection, as figured on the cornices.

Reproductions of Plates and Text from
PAIN'S "PRACTICAL HOUSE CARPENTER"

came a combination of the Greek fret and the dentil as shown in Figures 16, 19 and 23, and sometimes a row of drops either turned or square, as in Figures 17 and 20.

Another frequently used motive in early American cornices is one for which there is no name, or at least no name in common use; the curious row of curved corbels seen in Figures 16, 20 and 21. The origin of this motive is doubtful; a full cove used as a cornice was not uncommon in Colonial times; some of the earliest wood buildings in Massachusetts had plaster coves of this shape below the corona, and it remained a common crown motive on the brick and stone buildings around Philadelphia. It has been asserted that the curved consol was derived from the cove cornice. This seems hardly likely in view of the fact that while the motive was not common in England it was by no means unknown, and is frequently found in furniture before 1800; so that it was most likely a transformed furniture design used in architecture. The motive was published here before 1800 and very likely in England also, so that by 1799 when the Pierce house at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, (Fig. 20) was built it was an accepted part of the architect's repertory. This house, by the way, is attributed to Bulfinch, and while the writer has no facts to support this attribution, the house itself by its correct and mannered design is evidence that it was not the offhand product of some local carpenter-architect, even in a place where the average work was of so excellent a quality.

Figure 17—*Detail of Cornice—Built in 1810*
THE BACON HOUSE, KENT, CONNECTICUT

It is an old adage that the best work has in it something of imperfection, and this is again demonstrated by a comparison with the Pierce house and the Cabot-Churchill house at Bristol, Rhode Island (Frontispiece). The latter, built

Figure 18—*Detail of Cornice—Built in 1790*
THE OLD PARKER HOUSE, ESSEX, CONNECTICUT

Figure 19—*Detail of Entrance Cornice—Built about 1800*
THE PRUDENCE CRANDALL HOUSE, CANTERBURY, CONNECTICUT

Figure 20—*Detail of Cornice—Built in 1799*
THE JOHN PIERCE HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

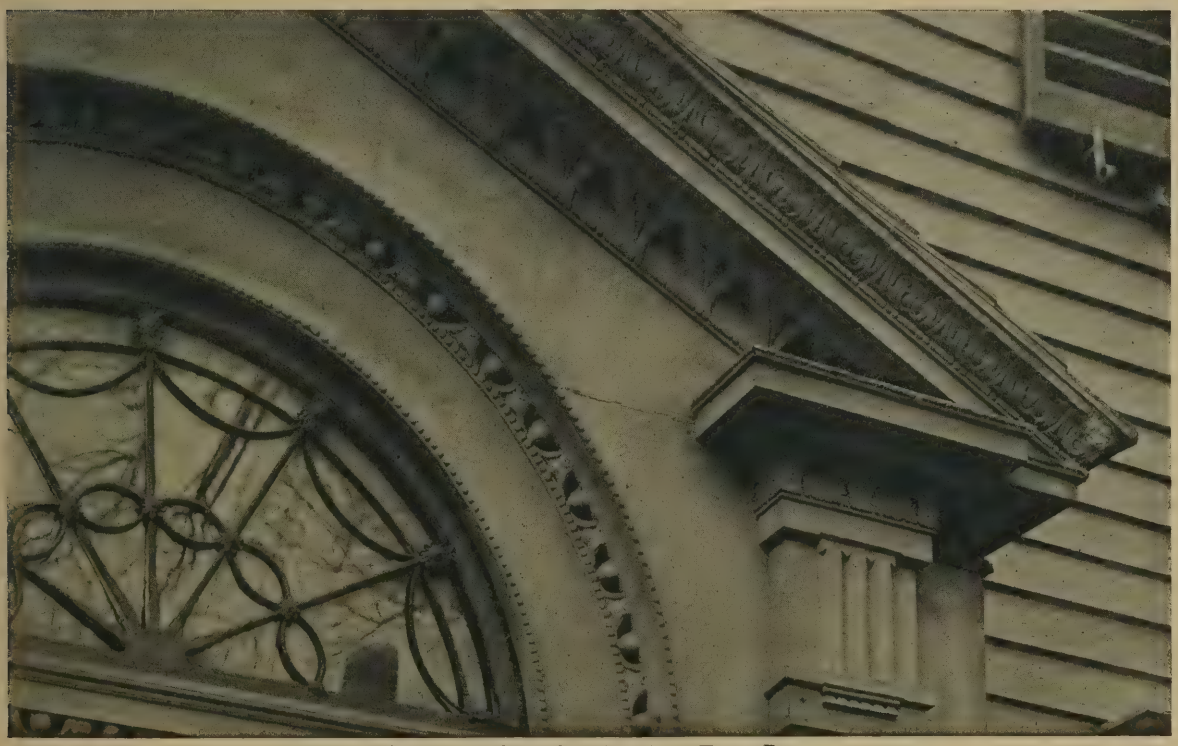


Figure 21—*Detail of Cornice—Front Door*
THE CHASE HOUSE, NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

in 1803, four years after the Pierce house, is far less sophisticated and yet more interesting. One can hardly uphold the railing as a model for copyists, the cymatium is probably too big and the dentil course too small to be perfect in scale, yet the whole cornice possesses a vigorous and insistent individuality rarely found in technically more skillful work. The eagles at the four corners doubtless aid in producing this sensation, although they are by no means entirely responsible, even with the pretty legend recited in the caption.

In the last group of houses executed before the Classic Revival superseded the genuine American expression of the Renaissance, we find some very interesting treatments of the frieze below the cornices. The house at Sharon, Connecticut (Fig. 22), is of the simple type with applied wood ornament simulating swags. The drops are tapered turned wood pegs nailed to the frieze, with the swags between carved in arcs of a circle; there is no indication of cloth, or of any other material, and yet the general effect is very pleasant, especially as emphasized in the photograph by the excellent leader head. This cornice has practically no soffit, the tight bead ornament below the corona being almost flush with the house, one of the few examples of this kind in the country. The designer of the house at 409 Hope Street, Bristol, Rhode Island (Fig. 23), "bit off more than he could chew," when he applied such a mouthful of architecture to the cornice; and his failure to appreciate the necessity of proper scale is the cause of the general bad effect of a cornice which contains some interesting features, notably the swags, and the saw tooth ornament at the bot-

Figure 22—*Detail of Cornice*
A HOUSE AT SHARON, CONNECTICUT

tom of the frieze. This saw tooth ornament is quite often found in furniture, especially on the frames of dressers and cupboards, but is exceedingly rare as an architectural ornament; the only other cases where it was used that come to mind being in an exterior door-way in Alexandria, Virginia, and in an interior doorway in Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley.

The house at Chatham Center, New York, built in 1789 (Fig. 24) has a frieze ornament borrowed from plaster work, and which, though used in a curious way in this case, was quite a common method of ornamentation around New York City, especially by the workmen of Dutch descent. It was executed by a gouge only, and complicated as it appears, could be carved rapidly and cheaply by a good mechanic (he did not need to be a good carver), so that on many of the Dutch houses we find doorways, window heads and mantels decorated and sometimes over decorated with carved sunbursts, rosettes and flutes all executed with a gouge. In the example illustrated even the urn between the sun rays could readily be cut with a gouge by a carpenter who was in no sense a carver, if he had a good layout of the design on his board.

Another furniture motive is the Chinese Chippendale interlaced fret on the frieze of the Wainwright house at Middlebury, Vermont, built in 1807 (Fig. 25). This was probably cut out with a key-hole saw and applied within a panel; and is especially satisfactory in combination with finely detailed cornice and pilasters, and the St. Andrews cross of the railing.

Figure 23—*Detail of Cornice*
HOUSE AT 409 HOPE STREET, BRISTOL, RHODE ISLAND

In the house at Nichols, Tioga County, New York (Fig. 26), on a road running along the banks of the Susquehanna River (part of the old trail

from the Hudson at Kingston to the headwaters of the Delaware at Unadilla), the decoration of the frieze has really a functional part to play in the design of the facade, in a manner which would make Vignola squirm, but which somehow does not seem at all forced in reality. This is a house of quite late design, with a mantel-like window trim, and though the treatment of the building is very free, it was evidently done by a man who knew very thoroughly what he was about. By the time this house was built, the American carpenter-architect had learned his business.

Even when what we have agreed to call the Colonial style was finally extinguished by the Greek Revival, the indigenous quality managed to make itself felt through the veneer of Greek forms. The cornice of the Windham Bank at Windham, Connecticut, built in 1832 (Fig. 28) has perhaps little conscious attempt at personal design, and its variance from book Greek architecture is most likely due to the inability of its builder to read plans, but the "White House" at Charlestown, New Hampshire (Fig. 27), is of a different sort. The classic motives appear to have been pretty clearly understood and consciously altered, not out of caprice, but from a realization that the type of triglyph and mutule, which was suited to a marble structure with walls three feet thick, might not be appropriate to a wooden house with six-inch walls. Thus in the frieze of the "White House," we have triglyphs of lace-like delicacy and moldings of very small scale, although the classic proportion is pretty closely held.

Figure 24—*Detail of Cornice*
HOUSE AT CHATHAM CENTER, NEW YORK

Before this (at least to the writer) fascinating subject is laid aside a word should be said about

the treatment of the gable end. Of course, in many cases, the classic theory of carrying the full cornice up the rake was adhered to, with various degrees of success at the critical point where the raking cornice intersects with the horizontal; but in a much larger number of cases the whole cornice was carried across the front only, with the corona and cymatium returning flush with the gables and the bed molds returning on themselves. In general, it may be said that with slopes of less than 30° the classic method appears to be the better, but for the steep roofs so common in our early work, the flat return is far the best, and in our modern houses of colonial precedent, a repeated error is to return the horizontal cornice across the gable end on all shapes of roof, making a true pediment of bad proportion. Like ourselves, the colonial designer sometimes found cases where he felt that a horizontal line at the cornice height was needed across the gable end, and that a full cornice was too heavy. This he solved in a number of ways, of which perhaps the most interesting was to return the main cornice on itself around the corner of the gable, but with a reduced projection, and carry the bed molds like a band across the gable; a very ingenious and sometimes lovely piece of design.

Figure 25—*Detail of Cornice—Built in 1807*
THE WAINWRIGHT HOUSE, MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT

The return of the main cornice on the gable end was always a problem, and the bad solutions we find on most present-day houses not designed by capable architects (and even on some which are), indicate better than words the ability in design of the old craftsmen, although the actual execution often fell behind the conception. As has just been said, the return of the full corince at normal projection across the gables is the excep-

tion rather than the rule; the most usual solution was to terminate the cornice somewhere near the corner, between the front and the gable end, finishing the gable end with a rake mold, but the exact point of termination was not fixed by custom. We find many cases where the full cornice was returned for a short distance around the corner, a distance only determined by what the designer considered appropriate unless corner pilasters were used, in which case the edge of the pilaster was naturally the limiting element; we find other cases in which all members of the cornice are returned but with a soffit greatly reduced in width so that the cornice becomes a sort of fragment of the belt course at each corner of the gable end; and perhaps the happiest solution is that in which only the corona and cymatium are returned around the corner with all bed molds, frieze and architrave returned upon themselves on the front of the building, perhaps with the inside edge of the corner board as a limiting point.

All the above treatments give a shelf upon which the end of the rake molds or verge boards may rest, but there are also many instances where the complete cornice extends as a decorative bank on the front only, returned upon itself as close as possible to the corner, but not around it. This left the rake mold (invariably present), to take care of itself at the bottom; a very awkward thing to manage and one which the Colonial architects found too much for them. Sometimes the foot of the rake was cut to the profile of the corona and cymatium and these members butted against it, sometimes the verge board turned at an angle and became the corner board

Figure 26—*Detail of Cornice*
HOUSE AT NICHOLS, TIOGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

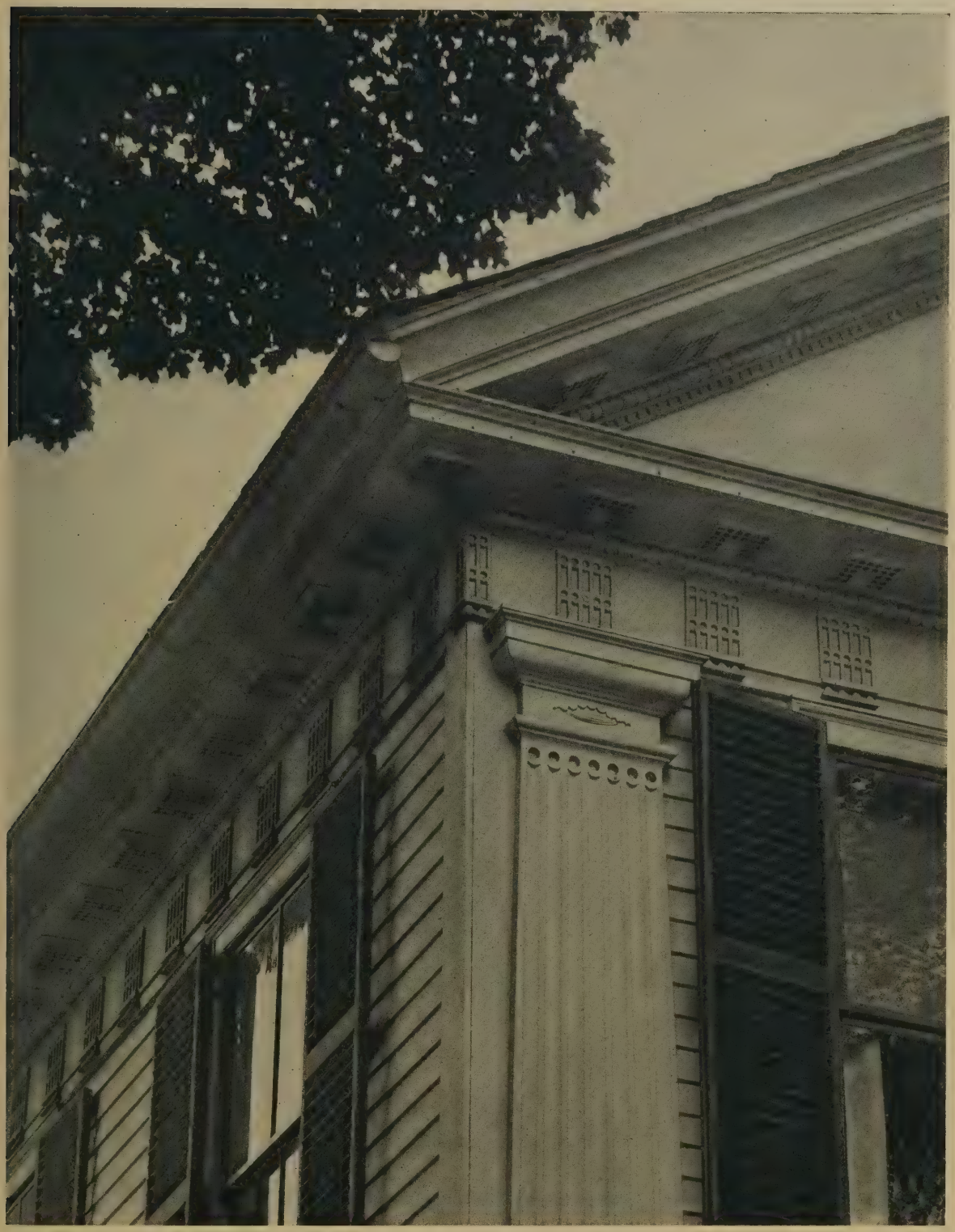


Figure 27—*Detail of Cornice and Pilaster*
"THE WHITE HOUSE," CHARLESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE

with the small mold at its top, below the overhanging shingles left in the air at the bottom, and sometimes the two returned around the corner at the front to meet the cornice. This was, of course, possible only with a box gutter and when the slope of the roof intersected the wall line at or near the height of the top of the cornice itself. Some of these methods were only partially successful, but it is undoubtedly true that even the poorest was better than a direct copy of the Classic cornice applied to the wood-built country house.

The illustrations in these articles should be sufficient to prove to the American architect how great a scope even a limited field offers to a man of ideas and imagination. In our present struggle for originality we tend to look to exotic architectures and bizarre motives for precedents, and by copying these things we seek for something new, regardless of its appropriateness to our civilization or our methods of construction. The Colonial architect knew less than we, and perhaps in that was his salvation, for he was forced by his own limitations to express himself within them to the everlasting advantage of his art.

Figure 28—*Detail of Cornice*
THE WINDHAM BANK, WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT

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The
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SERIES OF
Architectural Monographs
Volume 10 *Number* 4

RENSSELAERVILLE
An Old Village of the Helderbergs

BY

William A. Keller

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THE MARCHBANKS PRESS, NEW YORK

THE J. PAUL GETTY CENTER

An ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPH On

Rensselaerville,

An Old Village Of The Helderbergs

By William A. Keller

Prepared for Publication by
Russel F. Whitehead, formerly *Editor*
of The Architectural Record
& The Brickbuilder
150 *East Sixty First St.*
New York

Entrance Detail

THE STEVENS HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

The WHITE PINE SERIES *of*
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A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION
SUGGESTING THE ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE
AND ITS AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A
STRUCTURAL WOOD

VOLUME X 1924 NUMBER 4

Rensselaerville

An Old Village of the Helderbergs

By WILLIAM A. KELLER

Photographs by KENNETH CLARK

AFTER climbing some fourteen hundred feet over the high rocky ledge known as The Helderbergs, in the southwestern part of Albany County, New York State, one comes upon a sequestered village—a village not perched upon a commanding hilltop, as one might expect, but half hidden in a sheltered hollow surrounded by wooded hills, and now comprising all that is left of a once thriving and populous settlement; a unique village, still twenty-eight miles away from a railroad, overlooked by the majestic Catskill Range.

"On account of the slow growth of the Colony of New Netherlands, the Dutch States were induced, in 1629, to pass an ordinance granting to any member of The West India Company the right of selecting any tract of land, outside of the Island of Manhattan, 16 miles on one side, or 8 miles on either side, of any navigable stream, and extending as far inland as the patroon, (as the proprietor was called) should choose.

The chief conditions imposed were the establishment of a colony of at least 50 persons over 15 years of age, within four years, and the payment of 5 per cent on all trade except that in furs.

Under these grants, Kilean Van Rensselaer, a director in this Company, secured, with additional purchases made through his agents, land twenty-four miles each side of the Hudson, and forty-eight miles inland, constituting Rensselaerwyck, and including what is now Albany County, most of Rensselaer County, and a part of the County of Columbia."

At the close of the Revolutionary War, The Manor of Rensselaerwyck was held by Stephen Van Rensselaer, and then commenced the earliest practicable attempts to settle the more remote parts of it. The Patroon of the Colony, or Lord of the Manor, as he was afterward called, gave to each settler the free use of the land for seven years; and thereafter, if the settler chose to retain it, a perpetual lease or grant in fee, subject to the payment annually of twenty-two and a half bushels of wheat, a day's service with carriage and horses, and four fat fowls, for each lot of one hundred and sixty acres.

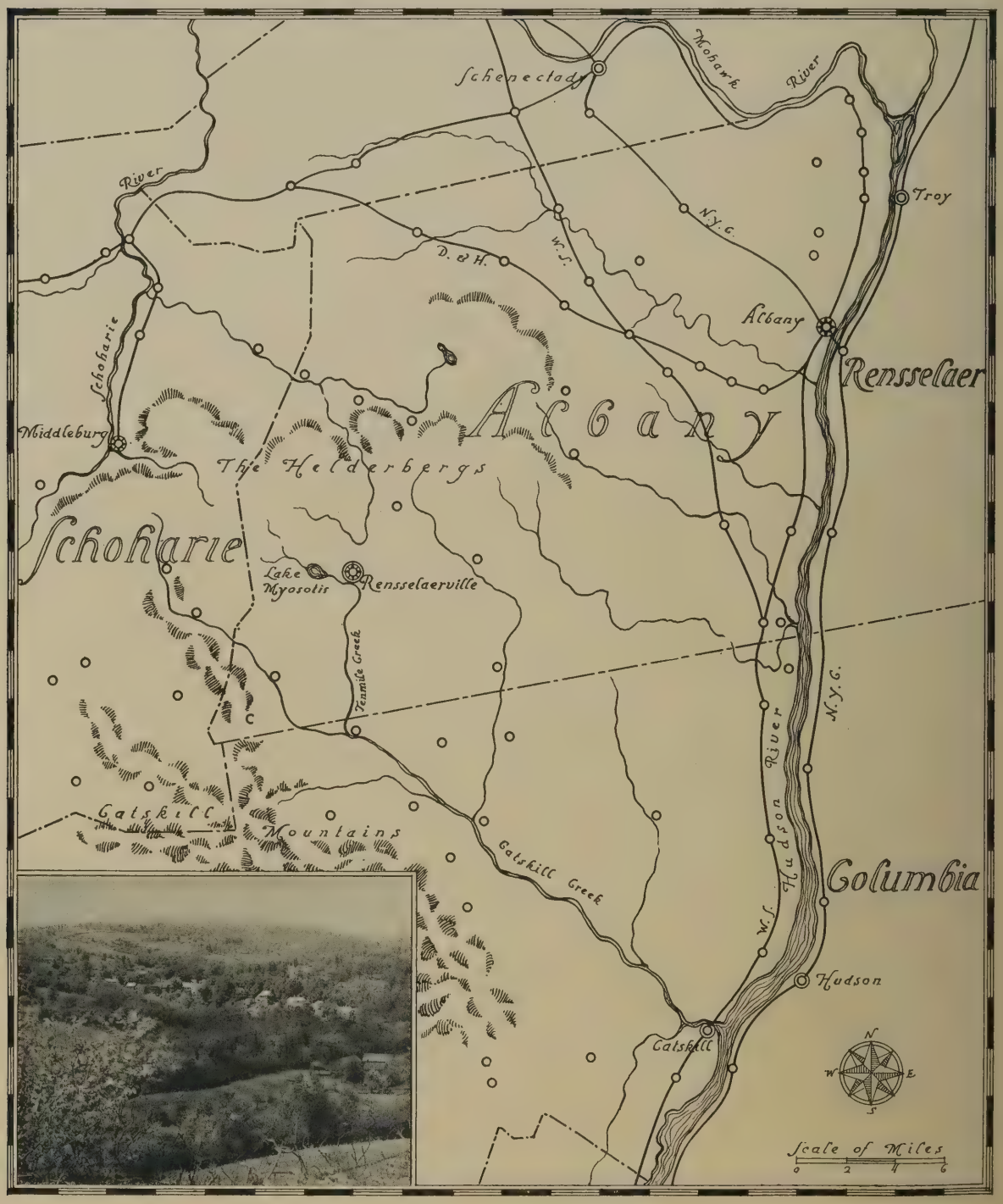
To this remote spot, mountainous, stony, and heavily timbered, came sturdy New Englanders—"men in pursuit of labor"—and doubtless they found plenty of it, as the only way of disposing of the forests was to fell, pile and burn the trees upon the land. Ye shades of those same trees! When firewood in the vicinity sells nowadays for ten dollars or more a cord!

The date of the settlement of the village—February 22nd, 1788—is established by a letter written by the son of Samuel Jenkins, the first settler, dated February 21st, 1850, in which he says: "It will be sixty-two years to-morrow, 12 o'clock noon, since my father's family were set off the sleighs in which they were, into a log cabin in this, then a drear wilderness; to look back it appears like a short time, but the difficulties and privations for a number of years will never be forgotten."

The spring brought a party of men looking for farms, and by their united efforts a flouring mill was raised on the banks of the Ten Mile Creek, the ox power of the neighborhood bringing the millstones from the distant village of Hudson.

From this small beginning the settlement grew until in 1832 it was one of the most thriving villages in the state, its position on the post road making it an important stopping place for coaches travelling to and from the western part of New York State. The abundance of hemlock furnished great facilities for leather making. After the roads were in condition for bringing in hides, there were tanneries in every quarter of the town.

Eventually some of these tanneries burned



down; the supply of bark was too nearly exhausted to justify rebuilding and so, as seemed inevitable with the advent of railroads in more accessible parts of the state, the prosperity of the village gradually diminished.

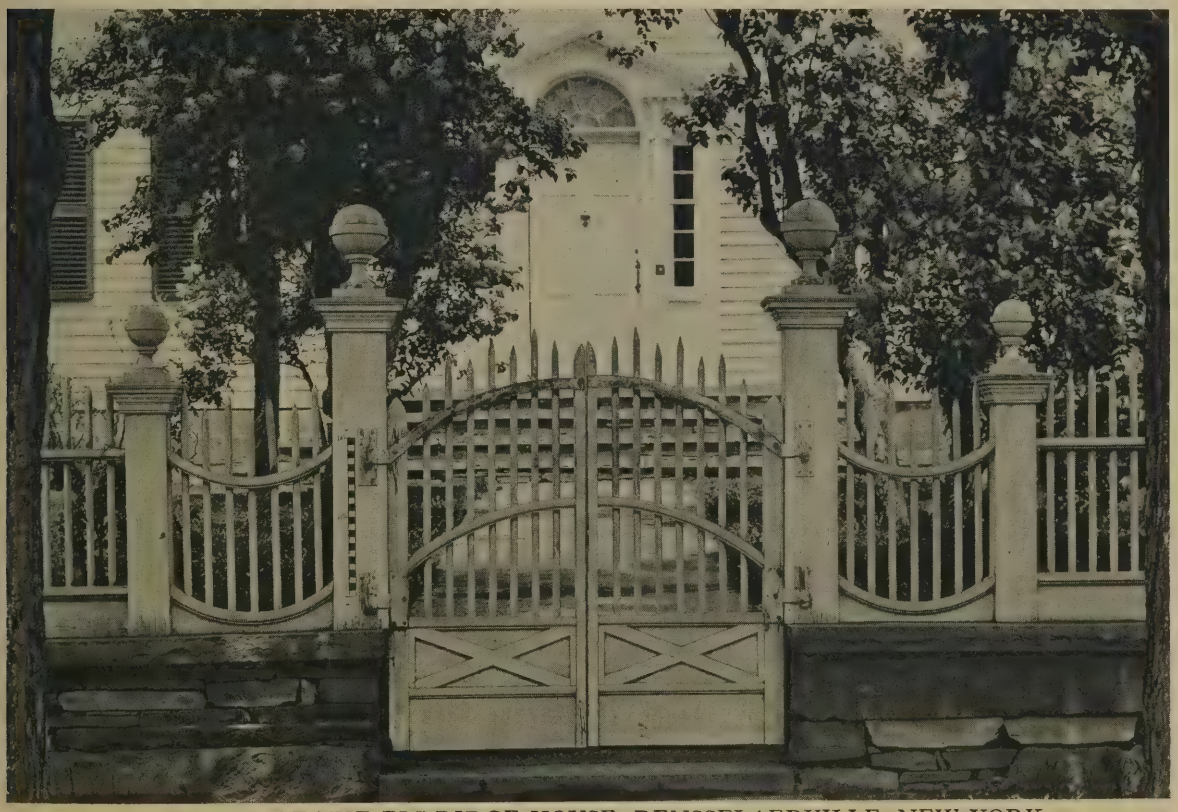
The last of its activities ceased with the removal of the woolen mill which had been established there by Messrs. Huyck and Waterbury, and which was for many years one of the few woolen mills in this country.

It is through the interest of the Huyck families that the modern needs of the community have been supplied in the form of a Town Hall and a Library, and through their efforts that many of the old houses have been preserved.

Rensselaerville, as one of the early settlements in the upper Hudson region, has an interest and charm that recall to mind some of the New England villages. The forebears of some of these Rensselaerville families had originally emigrated from Connecticut, becoming pioneers in settling the east end of Long Island, especially at East Hampton, whence came a goodly quota of first settlers to Rensselaerville. Thus the influence of Connecticut architecture can be traced in some of their homes, as shown by their excellent detail and their air of primness.

While three of the houses noted in the article are based on the same general design, each has a distinctive interest. All have a quiet dignity due to their broad fronts, the spacing of windows balancing the enriched central motif of wide pedimented doorway, and graceful Palladian window.

The architect-builder of all but one of the Rensselaerville houses shown in the accompanying photographs was Ephraim Russ. He is mentioned in the chapters on the village history as "that estimable man and faithful builder," and indeed he did faithfully reproduce in these houses the refinement and good taste of New England architecture. That he was engaged in serving his country, as well as his townspeople, is shown by an entry in an 1812 ledger (when the Jonathan Jenkins house was being built) stating that he was advanced, in lieu of money payment, "a regimental coat, do. vest, and military hatt."



GATEWAY OF THE ELDRIDGE HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

Built in 1809 by Rufus Watson

THE STEVENS HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

Built in 1806 by Daniel Conkling

THE ELDRIDGE HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

The Eldridge house, built in 1806 by Daniel Conkling, is now the summer home of Mrs. Lewis A. Eldridge, the great granddaughter of the original owner. Standing on slightly rising ground, with the reserve naturally given by a low street wall and a white fence, the house looks out over the village, to the bold outline of the northern Catskills on the distant horizon. The carrying down of the plain surface of the frieze to the cornice of the Palladian window is a feature not usually found in houses of this type. The fine proportion of sash divisions, consistently carried out in this and in most of the other houses illustrated, gives one the impression of a house of greater frontage than forty-eight and one-half feet. The laminated stone of the region provided an excellent material for walls and steps. Screen-doors (themselves a fly in the architectural ointment!) necessitate in many of these houses a thin shelf in front of the entrance transom bar. The two-story porch at the rear is, of course, a late addition. The immense lilacs along the walk to the entrance are believed to have been set out about the time the house was built.

Detail of Doorway

THE ELDRIDGE HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

REAR VIEW

THE JENKINS HOMESTEAD, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

It is surprising how many taverns and other places for the entertainment of travellers were found necessary, and how large a proportion of the townsmen were indorsed by the Board of Excise as "of good moral character and sufficient intelligence to keep a public tavern." Among those "sufficiently intelligent" was one Rufus Watson, who, in 1809 built and maintained as an inn, the house now the country home of Mr. Clarence W. Stevens. No doubt its broad front, and its hospitable entrance opening almost directly upon the street, invited many a weary traveller within. The original cornice has been restored and a box gutter formed. The original glass, most of which is still preserved, is of a pale green tone.

The Jenkins Homestead, built in 1812, has been occupied continuously by a member of the family ever since that date. There is an old letter in which Ephraim Russ (upon being engaged to build this house) writes of his appreciation for having had a free hand in the building of the Daniel Conkling house, and rather laments that he is not to have this same opportunity with the Jenkins house.

Detail of Doorway

THE JENKINS HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

Built in 1823 by Eli Hutchinson

THE RIDER HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

The homestead is set back from the street among elms, maples, locusts, black walnuts, and several white pines—one patriarch pine by the roadside standing there as if to show to all passers-by its pride in the old house built of its family stock. The original sash of twenty-four lights have been replaced by those of twelve. This change is regrettably noticeable in the Palladian window, which has the old (false in this case) muntin divisions in the arched head.

The view from the rear shows not only the beautiful setting of trees, but also the great mass of the house, not appreciated by a person viewing it from the street.

In the James Rider house, built in 1823 by Eli Hutchinson, the architectural effect is accomplished by the use of plain members on a wall surface of flush siding, with the slightest projection only, for window casings. The graceful doorway, and the shallow elliptical arches, recall some of the work of central New York State. This is one of the comparatively few houses of this locality that have the gable end toward the street—an arrangement that, in later days, when lots became narrow, and domestic architecture fell to its lowest terms, made the houses on many a village street a saw-tooth row of mediocrities. Ephraim Russ, after completing this house, wrote to a friend that he had been "screwed down to the last cent." And this is by no means the only case in which the architectural result has been the better because the designer was "screwed down" to a restricted budget!

Entrance Detail

THE RIDER HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

The Brock Sployd house, built in 1825 by Gurdon Conkling, is a delightful surprise to any one looking in between the quaint old gateposts, and seeing it through the half-screen of foliage. It attracts immediate attention, being so good in proportion and so "correct" in every detail. Its recessed portico of two bays, with a column in the center, is amusing. The average modern architect would say of the designer, respecting the central column, "Why did he do it?" The more—than—average architect would answer "Why shouldn't he do it?" At the left of the porch is an entry; the living room, sixteen by twenty-two feet, extends across the front, and a closet at the right balances the entry. Two gables, slightly separated, form the very unusual side elevation of this unusual house.

The Presbyterian Church, built in 1842, belongs to the Greek Revival period, and, like many others of the time, is essentially carried out along the lines of masonry architecture, though executed in wood. The effect of massive stonework is consistently obtained by the use of flush siding. One regrets the heavy steeple cornices, and that so heavy a moulding was used for the architrave.

The old buildings at the side of the church have all the fifty-seven varieties of width of siding, and

Built in 1825 by Gurdon Conkling

THE SPLOYD HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

Entrance Detail

THE SPLOYD HOUSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

Built in 1827 by Judge John Niles
THE MANSE, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

even the siding at the ends of the Manse has a pleasing variation.

The Manse, though not immediately adjoining the Church, is only a short distance away, and was the old Judge John Niles house, built in 1827. The "rambling" of the house toward the rear only partly shows in the picture. The porch was probably the first in the village.

There is danger of the modern suburban house reverting to the porch-less type of early Rensselaerville, if there is any considerable increase in the number of radio sets in use by our neighbors.

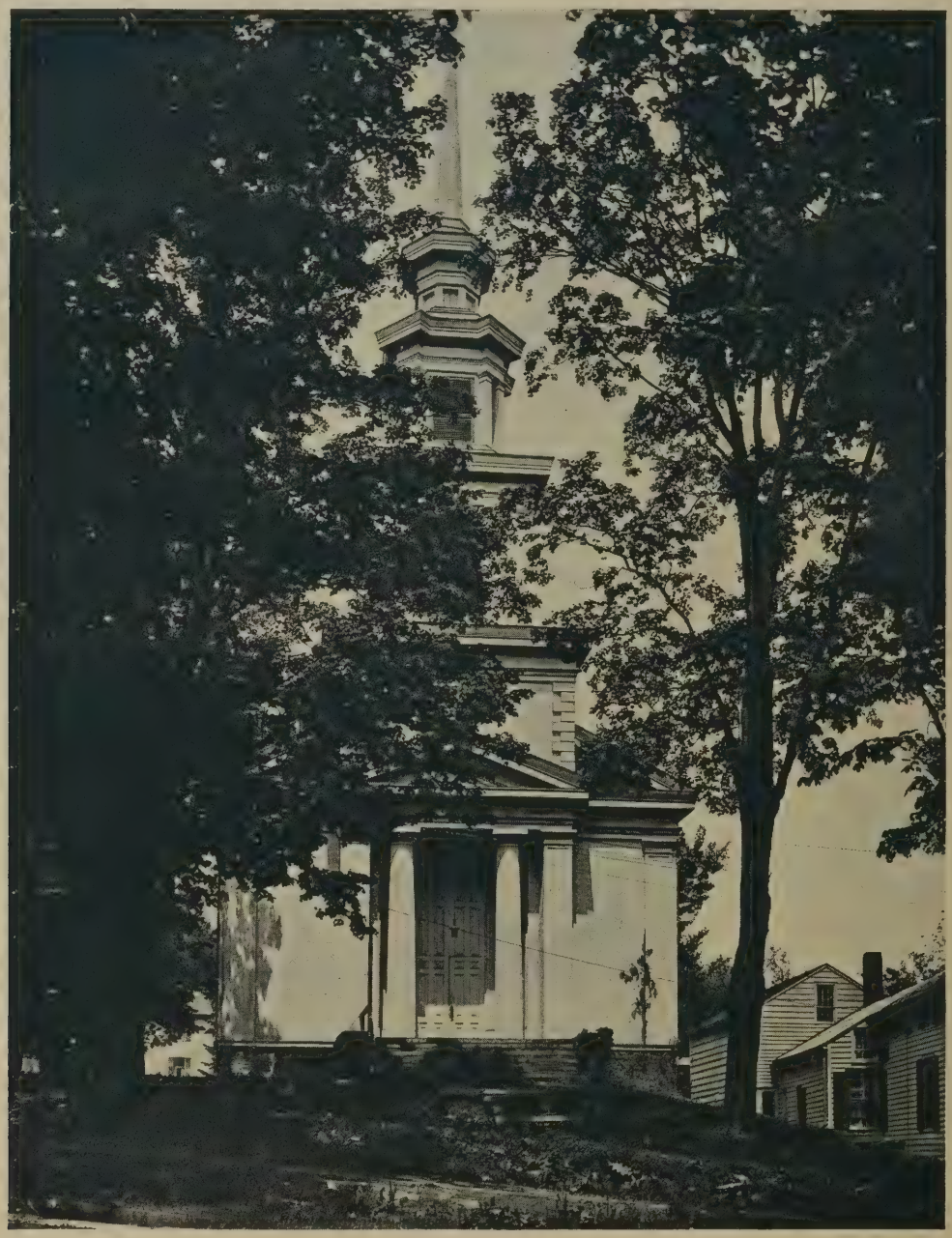
The Episcopal Church is shown in the title page sketch only, its site making it impossible to secure any good photograph. This church is another example of the work of our friend Ephraim Russ who built it in 1815. Its gallery windows, as is usually the case in these old churches, give the building the appearance of being two stories in height.

In the two churchyards "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep"—who, by their simple living within these Rensselaerville houses, first made them homes.

Some years ago there was published in a Rensselaerville newspaper a series of chapters on the early settlement of the village. These chapters are the only existing printed historical papers pertaining to the early settlement and they have been used as the writer's principal source of information. The author of these chapters ends her series with the hope that someone who has greater facilities for gathering information, will put it in "a form more presentable and less perishable, and for such purpose he will be quite welcome to what we have been able to contribute." Thus the heritage of her written words has come down to the writer to pass on, and in these lovely pictures especially taken for *The White Pine*

Series of Architectural Monographs is the "form more presentable and less perishable.

A word in conclusion: A just criticism of the houses of Rensselaerville might be that they look too new for buildings over one hundred years old. The answer is that they are living examples of the long life of houses built of white pine and rejuvenated with paint.



Built in 1842

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RENSSELAERVILLE, NEW YORK

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Volume 10 *Number* 5

WOODEN ARCHITECTURE IN THE Berkshires

BY
Roger Wearne Ramsdell

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An Architectural MONOGRAPH

Wooden Architecture IN THE Berkshires

By Roger Wearne Ramsdell

Prepared for Publication by
Russell F. Whitehead, formerly *Editor*
of The Architectural Record
& The Brickbuilder
150 *East Sixty First St.*
New York

DOORWAY OF THE SERGEANT HOUSE, STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

In 1734, John Sergeant of Yale commenced preaching to the peaceful Indian tribe in Stockbridge meadows

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VOLUME X 1924 NUMBER 5

Wooden Architecture in the Berkshires

By Roger Wearne Ramsdell

Photographs *by the Author and by Kenneth Clark*

The wooden buildings of the Berkshire towns and villages—and nearly all the older buildings are of wood—are to be found peculiarly interesting and illuminating instances that not only afford an architectural chronicle of that portion of Massachusetts, but also serve to point a moral that architects and laymen alike may very well apply to their profit.

It has been the fortune of many of the Berkshire towns to lie upon important arteries of travel, that is to say, the arteries of travel as they were ordered in the days of the stage coach, when the various centers of population within our particular field most chiefly attained their growth. This fact meant that they were especially accessible to every new influence from the outside world, and that the character of the buildings erected as the years passed assumed a sort of cosmopolitan catholicity of expression that plainly proclaimed how ready the Berkshire people were to accept and adopt each phase of style as it arose to dominate the course of design. There are early 18th Century examples richly reminiscent in their motifs and details of those robust Baroque interpretations of the Classic mode handed down from the days of Sir Christopher Wrenn and his immediate followers. There are severely urban reminders of that somewhat later era when austere, academic Palladianism held sway and meticulous solicitude for ancient precedent was not confined to dilettante and professional purists, but permeated the whole social consciousness of the period and affected the country architect-carpenters in varying degree, according to their understandings and nimbleness of perception. In the next succeeding epoch the seed of Adam inspiration fell on fertile soil, and produced a plentiful crop of delicacies and refinements characteristic of that age. Then manifestations of Neo-Classicism in turn gave place to a newer era with Roman mode that drew

THE SERGEANT HOUSE, STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.
Built early in the 18th Century

Early 18th Century Doorway
HOUSE AT STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.

its being and forms partly from the current Regency style in England and partly from the creations of the Directoire and early Empire in France. This suave and pleasant Anglo-French blending gradually yielded to the fully developed types of the Greek Revival. The complete record lies open to be read in the Berkshire towns. What has been said of dwelling houses in this connection also holds good with reference to structures erected for civil or public purposes.

To understand this comprehensive collection of successive types, one must remember what has already been pointed out—that the constant contact of the Berkshire towns and villages with the outside world ensured not only susceptibility but also a warm welcome to each influence as it arrived. The Berkshire towns were unlike so many other New England towns that displayed with singular nicety some one type of architectural development and became classics for the particular style that dominated their streets. For example, when prosperity and affluence came early, we find a great number of houses exhibit contemporary architectural forms in great numbers and with a perfection that stamps the growth as unmistakably of a certain period. In other towns or villages, when prosperity came late, the evidences of later affluence are reflected with equal distinctness in the local architecture. Unfortunately, some places where the early or later 18th Century types had flourished with charming results, received a fresh impetus of wealth, in the mid-19th Century and those phenomina bore deadly fruit in an appalling crop of alterations and additions so that the original character of the houses was either wholly obliterated or else marred beyond any reasonable hope of restoration. Extra gables with jig-saw barge boards; new front doors of stock mill pattern, with single plate glass lights filling the entire upper half; the wholesale destruction of the window glazing and the substitution of soleless negative sashes with large panes; the bursting forth of irrelevant bay windows; the contrivance of still more irrelevant door hoods supported on fearfully and wonderfully made brackets fretted with all the labyrinthine contortions of the industrious

Early 18th Century Doorway
HOUSE AT GREAT BARRINGTON, MASS.

but misguided jig-saw artist,—these and similar achievements of mid-Victorian mauling and manhandling, to say nothing of even more ruthless, more far-reaching vandalism have left their indelible trail of horrid ruin.

The Berkshire towns, it is true, suffered their share of calamities and accidents during the era of unenlightenment, but they have managed to preserve intact a great deal that is well worth while—enough to retain their character and afford instances of architectural excellence and elegance that ought not to be overlooked in any survey of wooden architecture.

What makes the study of the early wooden architecture both engaging and valuable is the diversity of interpretations to be found, interpretations for which the local architect-carpenters were wholly responsible. Their work cannot be considered in the light of an adroit exhibition of slavish archæology display. It was very far from it. It was replete with native vitality whether the manifold differences of expression encountered were due to an imperfect understanding of the original prototypes; an insufficient acquaintance with the architectural books of the period, or whether they were begotten of the promptings of ingenuity and ignorant mother wit when working with materials different from those employed in the Classic originals, it would be difficult to say. One is inclined to believe that both factors played their parts in the evolution that translated the forms of wood and stone into wood. At any rate,

THE LENOX ACADEMY BUILDING, LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS
Built in 1803

THE LENOX ACADEMY BUILDING, LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS

Dating from 1803, formerly a famous classical school and now a private school for small children

HOUSE AT RICHMOND, MASSACHUSETTS. (WEST OF LENOX MOUNTAIN)
Built in late 18th Century, in town named in honor of the Duke of Richmond

what we of today see is that the builders of the 18th and early 19th Centuries had mastered the vocabulary of domestic architecture in the Classic modes, but spoke the language with a local accent. And all these local variations stamped with individuality the several places where they occurred, for in no two areas do we find precisely the same evidences of originality in adaptations. In one neighborhood it may be a particular type of doorway; in another, an unusual type of gable end window may arrest attention. Oftentimes, within the bounds of a small area, it is possible to trace the activities of a single architect-carpenter by little peculiarities in the handling of certain details that he had left spread about on this house or on that, like trade-marks. Those little features are mere mannerisms without falling into the category of affectations. As an example of this sort of thing, we may point to the oft repeated use of the so-called Palladian window as an attic light within the peak of the gable end, in a great number of houses where the boundaries of New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts meet just at the foot of the Berkshire Hills.

Notwithstanding the quasi-cosmopolitan character of wooden architecture in the Berkshire

ENTRANCE DETAIL—HOUSE AT RICHMOND, MASSACHUSETTS

ENTRANCE DETAIL—THE FRY HOUSE, RICHMOND, MASSACHUSETTS

towns, a fact to which attention has already been drawn, the same impulse toward individualistic interpretation was actively at work, just as it was in more secluded neighborhoods where one tradition was strongly entrenched. One of the most conspicuous evidences of this tendency to develop local mannerisms and diverting conceits is seen in the frequent employment of a semi-elliptical gable end window above a pilastered plinth. In Great Barrington and several other places the leaded glazing of these attic lights assumes divers pleasing patterns. But even the local mannerisms exhibited many variations within its restricted area. In the pediment of the little bank at Stock-

ENTRANCE DETAIL—THE PERRY HOUSE, RICHMOND, MASSACHUSETTS

THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, WILLIAMS COLLEGE, WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

Detail of Entrance

THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, WILLIAMS COLLEGE, WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

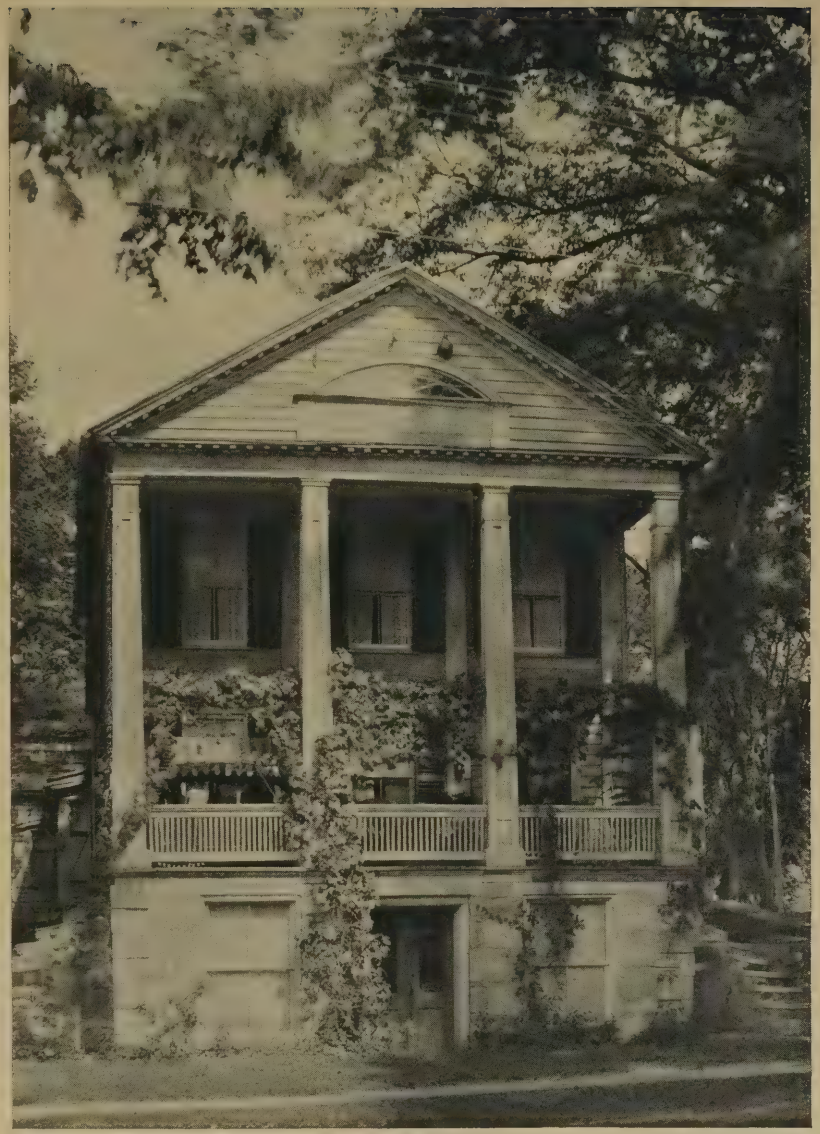
bridge the semi-ellipse on a pilastered plinth appears merely as a decorative motif and a very effective one at that. There is no light in the half-ellipse, but instead a wooden fan or sunburst device with vigorously modelled divergent rays. Sometimes, too, the semi-ellipse was converted into a semi-circle above a plinth and was either glazed or filled with a rayed motif. The employment of these conceits kept its hold on the imagination for a long time, for we find it in the pediment of the Neo-Grec house at West Stockbridge and even after ellipses went out of fashion, the tradition of an attic light on a plinth persisted, for not a few fully developed Greek Revival

Detail of Cornice
THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE, WILLIAMS COLLEGE, WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

"temple" houses display a very rigid rectangular leaded light above a plinth. The changes are many in every form of this device, but the conception back of it is unchanged. Thus we have variety in unity not only in the manifold sum total of the Berkshire wooden architecture, with its procession of related styles, but also in the adapting of a conception, partly decorative, partly utilitarian, to employment in varied environments.

In all of the Berkshire houses almost without exception, the plan is perfectly obvious. A rectangle, sometimes with, sometimes without an ell extension at the rear, and simply and logically divided into the requisite rooms and halls without attempting any unusual or ingenious devices or arrangements. Even to the very urban houses built at the end of the 18th Century or in the early years of the 19th Century, full of Adam elegancies so far as their exteriors were concerned, there was no disposition to indulge in elliptical rooms, circular halls or oval stairwells. In houses presenting such exteriors as those at Richmond or at Flat Brook one might expect to discover an occasional flight of this sort. But there were none.

LATE 18TH CENTURY HOUSE AT FLAT BROOK, MASSACHUSETTS



GREEK "TEMPLE" HOUSE, WEST STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.

BANK IN STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.

Semi-elliptical light and fan on plinth derived from earlier semi-elliptical windows of local usage

The utmost departure from a strictly rectangular plan consisted in a one story wing at one or both sides of the main mass of the house.

Although the Berkshire architect-carpenter employed the different phases of the Classic mode very largely as a repertoire of external decoration, using the more organic features only at a comparatively late date and in a very conservative manner then, their achievements have a lesson to teach us, the lesson of flexibility. While ardently admiring Classic forms and ever ready to make use of them to the fullest extent they were not purists. They did not scruple to combine and modify details in a way that would have made the British worshippers of Palladio rave with anguish. And yet, they often did it so well and with such consummate delicacy and interest that one cannot cavil at the liberties they took. Indeed, the exercise of their self-appointed license and independence of action made the Classic mode a vital thing. Their "jumbling" has supplied a precedent that more than one architect of our own day and generation has turned to account with happy effect.

And now for the moral of our tale. A recent survey of the field of domestic architecture plainly shows that an ever increasing number of people are demanding houses of a distinctly romantic type rather than houses of Classic mould. The reason is not far to seek. Too many architects and too many laymen seem to have the idea that all that is necessary in order to design a house of the Classic type is to create a rectangular mass, poke the requisite number of fenestrations in for doors and windows and then hang on an appropriate "*quantum sufficit*" of hackneyed details. The result of such an unworthy conception must inevitably be stupid and repellent. People crave variety as a modicum of individuality. The craving is natural and perfectly justifiable. But if they build and live in houses of the type just alluded to, houses turned out by the dozen with standardized stupidity, they can have neither variety nor individuality. Consequently they turn to the romantic school to satisfy their cravings.

But the Classic mode has just as much vitality as it ever had. The trouble is with the sodden folly of those who conceive it to be what has just been pointed out. The early builders and adapters succeeded in achieving endless interest and engaging variety, while adhering to the general unity of the Classic traditions. If the Classic style is to continue as a vital factor in domestic architecture, it must be rescued from the unworthy opinion formed of it by those insufficiently acquainted with all its varied possibilities. There can be no better corrective for the notion of monotony attaching to this time-honored fashion than a close study of what the architect-carpenter of a bygone day did in the Berkshire towns dominated by the tradition of wooden architecture.

GATE POSTS AND FENCE

HOUSE AT RICHMOND, MASSACHUSETTS

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The
WHITE PINE
SERIES OF
Architectural Monographs
Volume 10 *Number* 6

A REVIEW and A FORECAST

BY
Russell F. Whitehead

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THE MARCHBANKS PRESS, NEW YORK

The

WHITE PINE

SERIES OF

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A REVIEW and A FORECAST

By Russell F. Whitehead

Prepared for Publication by
Russell F. Whitehead, formerly *Editor*
of The Architectural Record
& The Brickbuilder
150 *East Sixty First St.*
New York

THE FIFTH MEETING HOUSE, LANCASTER, MASSACHUSETTS

CHARLES BULFINCH, ARCHITECT

One of the most satisfactory examples of Bulfinch's churches, now standing. The elaborately designed cupola, without a spire and the arcaded portico give evidence of the lightness and grace of Bulfinch's touch

The WHITE PINE SERIES *of* ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPHS

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION
SUGGESTING THE ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE
AND ITS AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A
STRUCTURAL WOOD

VOLUME X 1924 NUMBER 6

A Review and A Forecast

By Russell F. Whitehead

Photographs by Kenneth Clark

Ten years ago The White Pine Bureau began the publication of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs* as a means of calling to the attention of the architectural profession the fact that white pine was not an extinct species, and was actually being cut and manufactured more rapidly than it could be marketed. The selection of a Series of Monographs on early American architecture as a means of advertising was due primarily to the interest of the Chairman of the Bureau, Mr. George F. Lindsay, in Colonial work, and to his desire to produce something of permanent value to the architectural profession, as well as to exploit the product of his Bureau. We believe that it has never been necessary to convince the architect of the value of white pine, but it was for a while necessary to tell him that it was still available; that object has been attained, and the White Pine Bureau has ceased to advertise. We believe too that our work has been genuinely useful to the architects to whom it has been sent in giving them a broader conception of the elements of our native architecture than could have been obtained in any other way. To those of the profession who live along the Atlantic seaboard many of the houses illustrated are not new, or at least are of familiar types, yet these men have been quick to appreciate that, while there may be one or two old houses in the neighborhood to which they may look for precedent, this magazine has brought into their libraries a large part of the New England region, with occasional glimpses into other fields.

If we have anything to regret, it is that we have unconsciously laid somewhat undue stress upon the work in New England, partly perhaps because we were interested in white pine and all the work in that section was of this material; partly perhaps because much of New England has remained quiescent during the past hundred years. New Jersey once a thinly settled state now has a population more dense than that of China; in New York and Pennsylvania the Colonial villages have grown to great cities; naturally in what is called "the march of progress," much of the old work has been destroyed, but, in Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and the western parts of Massachusetts and Connecticut the population has increased very slowly, or in some cases has even decreased, so that the old houses still remain, and from our first Monograph—that excellent technical description of our oldest surviving houses, by Mr. Chandler—to the latest on "Wooden Architecture in the Berkshires," a majority of the houses illustrated have been in New England.

The first Monograph of the Series was published in July, 1915, so that we are now completing the tenth volume, something we hardly dared to look forward to ten years ago, for, in the first place, there was no certainty that the results would warrant the continuation of the publication, and in the second we were doubtful as to whether there were enough old buildings of interest to furnish material for so long a period, without repetition and without the use of "intensive" publication of a few buildings. But, as we have gone about the country with the two remarkable photographers who have done so much to make this Series a success, we have found that there appears to be no end to the old work which is not only interesting because of its age, but also because of the extraor-

dinary variety of design that the Colonial architects were able to achieve within the narrow limits of their motives; and our trouble has been, not to find material for the space, but to find space for the material. Therefore, when the White Pine Bureau decided to stop all advertising, including the Monographs, the editor, knowing that there was more still to be done than we had done in ten years, asked for the privilege of carrying on the Series as an independent enterprise. This was generously granted by the WHITE PINE BUREAU; a very gracious act on their part, since it enables us to continue a work which we love, with the prestige of ten years' success, and assures to the architectural profession the continuance of a publication which many of them have been good enough to say was invaluable.

We were at once called upon to decide as to how the publication could be made to carry itself, whether by a high subscription rate, or by advertising. It is obvious that the cost of securing our own photographs from all over the country and of printing the Series in a way appropriate to the material was out of all proportion to the usual magazine cost, and we neither desired to set a prohibitive subscription price nor to open the pages of the magazine to unrelated advertising, which would, we felt, distinctly lower the quality of the Monographs. Here again, we were very lucky, for Weyerhaeuser Forest Products offered to buy four pages in each issue, at a price which made the low subscription rate possible, and have, it seems to us, both generously and wisely asked us to illustrate their advertising with additional pictures related to the subject of each Monograph.

Indeed, we believe that *The White Pine Series* is in a small way unique, for in spite of the flood of publications of old Colonial work, nothing, not even the magnificent "Georgian Period" has published the wealth of material we have in the past, and as we will continue to do in the future. No one else has the time or the occasion to search out little old towns which have neither become summer colonies nor grown to be commercial cities. Look on the old map in this issue, and see how many are the towns of which the names are entirely unfamiliar, as for example, New Ipswich, in the "Hampshire Grants," and Killingsley, in "Konekticut." Yet both of these contain much interesting material which will be published in early numbers of the Monograph. It is in such places that we feel we can be most useful, rather than in the illustration of buildings near the big cities, although these may be of a higher quality of design and of greater historical interest. It may also be said that the country architect-builders, less confined by tradition and inheritance, were apt to produce new and vigorous forms; the designers of, let us say Independence Hall in Philadelphia and the City Hall in New York knew very thoroughly what they were doing, yet if they created more perfect buildings than the country carpenter, we have less to learn from their use of ornament. It was the country carpenter, possibly because of his ignorance, who evolved new motives from old forms and his detail, if often crude, and sometimes ugly, was rarely trite, always provocative.

In the beginning we were somewhat uncertain as to how our material would best be treated. We had determined that we would publish only old work, only residences and only exteriors; and that we would publish nothing that was not a document the architects would be glad to preserve. These limitations were in part fixed by the advertising policy of the White Pine Bureau, but now those of the restrictions which have militated against the fullest usefulness of the Series to the architect will be removed. We will continue to make each number truly a Monograph, treating of some small town or township, or, if our hopes are realized, we will publish Monographs on the work of some of our early architects, as, for example, Isaac Damon, of Northampton, Massachusetts or Isaac Fitch, of Lebanon, Connecticut. It is not easy to secure authorative information as to the architect of any old building, but we have been gradually gathering material, and as fast as enough becomes available, we will publish collections of the work of each man.

Nor will we in future be confined to the publication of residence work, and a Monograph on any little town will show it completely, including such of its old churches or public buildings as still remain, and with photographs of both interior work and minor architectural accessories. It will no longer be necessary to restrict our photographs to buildings chiefly constructed of white pine, although since white pine was the most durable of

Detail of Central Part

THE SQUIRE BOWDOIN RESIDENCE, SOUTH HADLEY FALLS, MASSACHUSETTS

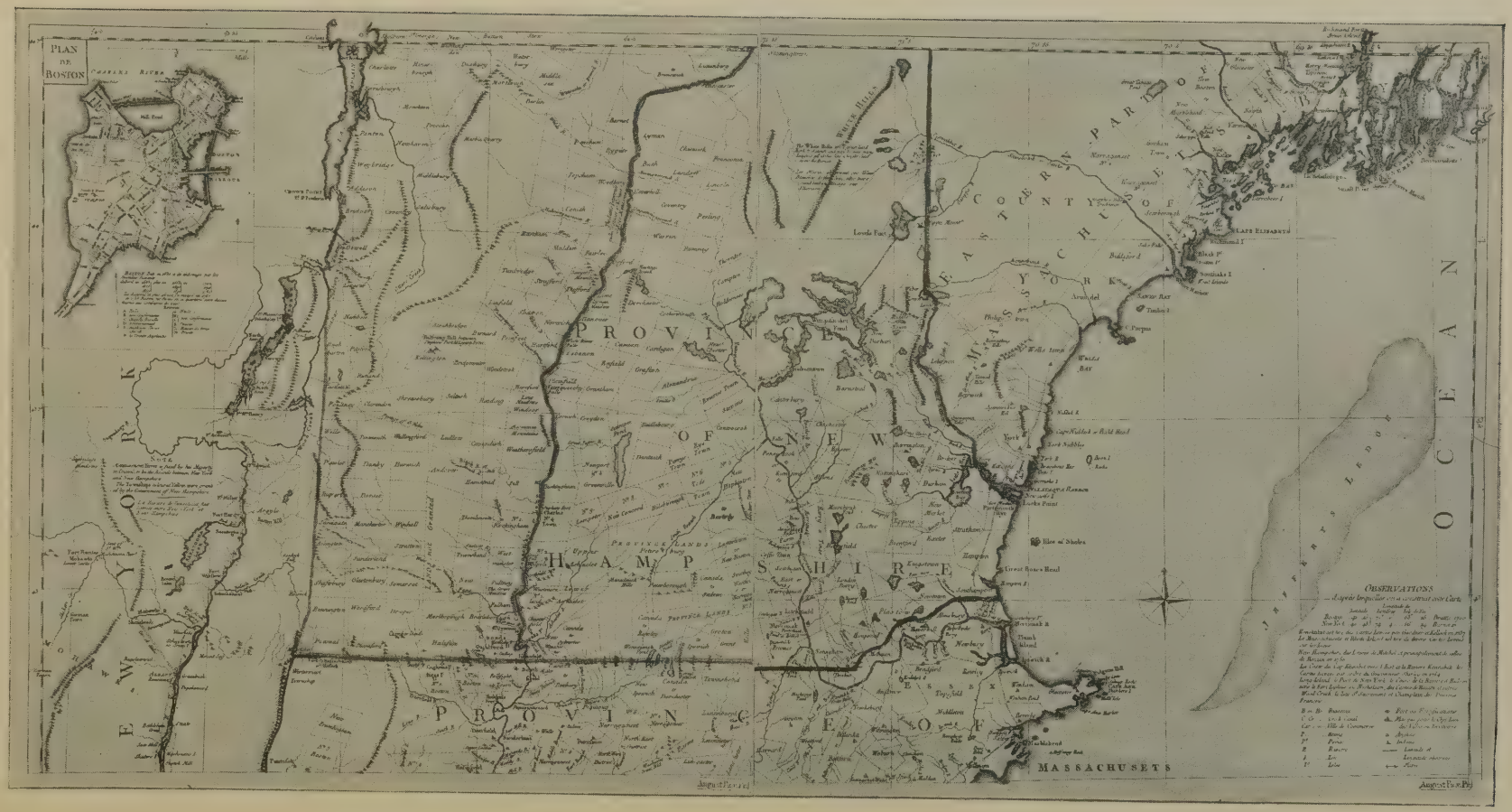
THE EARLE HOMESTEAD, PLEASANTVILLE, NEW YORK

THE REED HOUSE, WESTMORELAND, NEW HAMPSHIRE

the woods used by the Colonists, it is likely that most of the wooden structures, and the trim, doorways, etc., of brick or stucco buildings will be of this material. Thus it will be possible to illustrate some of the charming work still existing in the southern states, in such places as New Bern in North Carolina and Clinton in Georgia, regardless of material and only with an eye for its architectural interest. It is of course true that there is far more work of moderate size and good quality in the northern than in the southern states; the civilization of the south was not favorable to the evolution of a wealthy middle class, such as built most of the northern houses, nor were slave mechanics often capable of producing the charming details of such proportions as were, in Colonial times, left to the men who executed them to design. Yet, there is much work in the southern states which has never been published that is in the highest degree worthy of publication, and of use to the designers. This we now propose to find and record in *The White Pine Monograph Series*.

We spoke above of the two men who have made most of the photographs used in this Series, the late Mr. Julian Buckly and Mr. Kenneth Clark. It is perhaps not generally known that both for many years practised architecture, until their knowledge of and fondness for photography induced them to change their profession entirely; but we are sure that no man not an architect could photograph architecture so sympathetically and with such knowledge of what will make the most valuable document for the architect. We are, therefore, more than pleased to be able to announce that Mr. Kenneth Clark will hereafter work exclusively for *The White Pine Series*, and with the editor, will devote his time to the discovery and photography of hitherto unknown work.

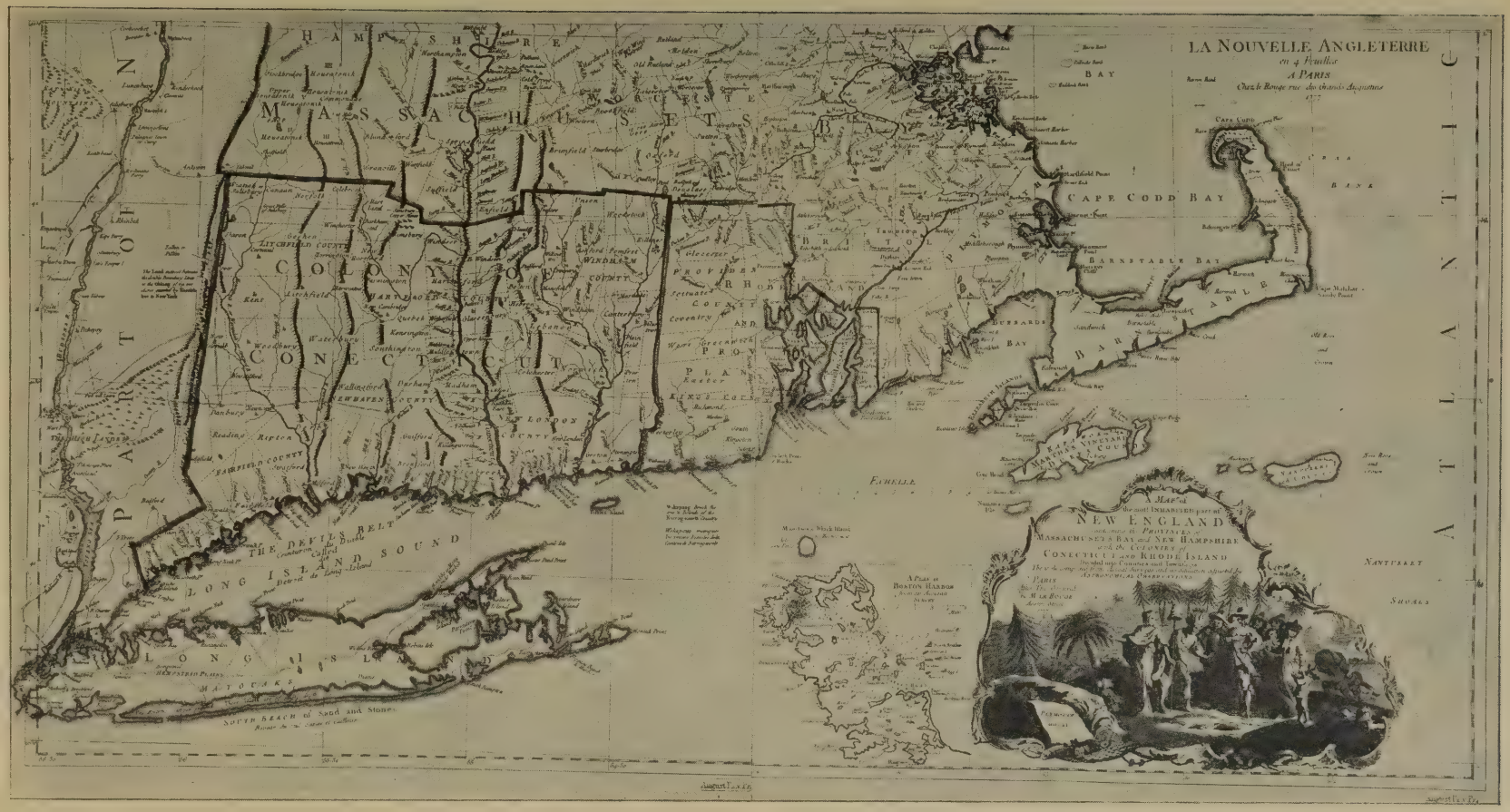
We realize also that the photograph can never take the place of the measured drawing; one is a necessary supplement to the other; greatly as we admire the "Georgian Period," we cannot but feel that it needs more photographs as *The White Pine Series* has needed measured drawings. For this



Monographs of *The White Pine Series* Treating of this Section

Vol. I No. 1. Colonial Cottages of the XVII Century
Vol. II No. 2. Architecture in Massachusetts
Vol. II No. 3. Early Houses of Connecticut Valley
Vol. III No. 1. Three Story Houses of New England
Vol. III No. 2. Early Architecture of Andover, Mass.
Vol. III No. 3. Old Houses in Newburyport
Vol. IV No. 1. Marblehead
Vol. IV No. 2. Old Houses on Southern Coast of Maine
Vol. IV No. 6. Colonial Architecture in Vermont
Vol. V No. 3. Historic Houses of Litchfield
Vol. VI No. 5. Old Deerfield, Mass.
Vol. VII No. 1. Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Vol. VIII No. 1. Port Towns of Penobscot Bay
Vol. VIII No. 5. Bennington, Vermont and Vicinity
Vol. X No. 4. Rensselaerville, an old Village of the Helderbergs
Vol. X No. 5. Wooden Architecture in the Berkshires

A Map of the most Inhabited part of New England, *Made in* 1777. *(Northern Section)*



Monographs of *The White Pine Series* Treating of this Section

Vol. I No. 2. New England Colonial Houses
Vol. I No. 3. Farm Houses of New Netherlands
Vol. II No. 3. Early Houses in Connecticut Valley
Vol. II No. 5. Old Woodbury, Connecticut
Vol. III No. 5. The Bristol Renaissance
Vol. III No. 6. Early Dwellings of Nantucket
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Vol. V No. 1. Seventeenth Century Connecticut House
Vol. V No. 2. Settlements on Eastern End of Long Island
Vol. V No. 5. Old Chatham
Vol. VI No. 1. The Boston Post Road
Vol. VI No. 6. Essex, A Connecticut River Town
Vol. VII No. 6. The Town of Suffield, Connecticut
Vol. VIII No. 3. Newport, An Early American Seaport
Vol. IX No. 1. Some Forgotten Farmhouses on Manhattan Isle
Vol. IX No. 2. Rivertowns of Connecticut
Vol. IX No. 5. Stage Coach Road from Hartford to Litchfield
Vol. IX No. 6. Old Canterbury on the Quinnebaug
Vol. X No. 1. Old Hill Towns of Windham County

A Map of the most Inhabited part of New England, *Made in* 1777. *(Southern Section)*

Front Doorway
A HOUSE AT TAUNTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Front Doorway
THE GOV. JONATHAN TRUMBULL HOUSE, LEBANON, CONN.

Front Doorway
THE CHAPIN HOUSE, BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Front Doorway
THE LEWIS HOUSE, BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

reason we have determined to include in each future issue measured drawings of some important piece of work connected with the subject of the Monograph; important, not because of size or expense, or richness of decoration, but because it contains some new little architectural motive or some odd twist to a well known one.

These things, we believe, will in time make *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs* without rival among the architectural publications in the world. We propose to cover little by little and thoroughly the whole field of Colonial and early American architecture, except, perhaps such familiar buildings that their republication would serve no useful purpose. This is our ambition, and in this number we are giving a sort of tabloid exposition of what we consider to be the scope of our work. We no longer intend to ignore so superb a piece of early design as Bulfinch's church at Lancaster, Massachusetts (frontispiece), because it is brick and a church, nor such a charming motive as the overmantel in the Amanda Greene house at Newport, Rhode Island, (page 14), because it is an interior. We expect to range wide for our material, and to discover other lovely and unknown work as far away as the Reed House at Westmoreland, New Hampshire (page 7), and as near at hand as the Earle Homestead, at Pleasantville, New York (page 6).

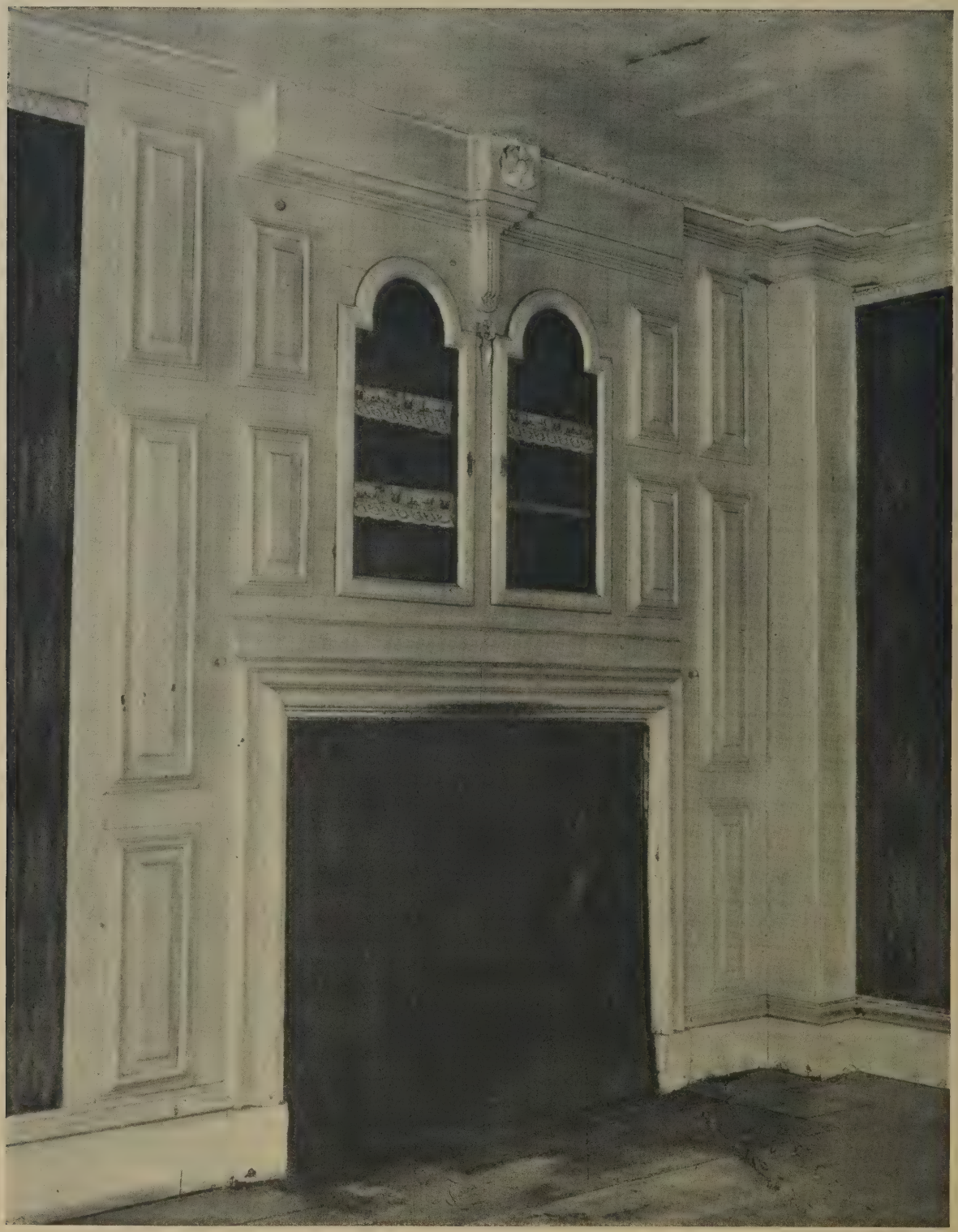
We are not sure there are any other gates so delightful as the amazing "Peacock" gate at Rensselaerville, New York, but if there are, we propose to find them; we know that other treatments of the entrance exist as pleasant as that of the house at Taunton, Massachusetts (page 10), and we intend to measure them and to illustrate them thoroughly.

THE "SCOTLAND ROAD HOUSE," WINDHAM, CONNECTICUT

We desire also to express our gratitude to those many architects who in the past have directed our attention to old houses or old towns not previously known to us, and to say that any information of this character is most welcome.

For once we have violated our own principles and produced a number which is not a monograph, but a compilation. We trust that our readers will forgive us, for we are entering upon a new stage in the history of this Series, and are just a little bit excited about it and want to show you why.

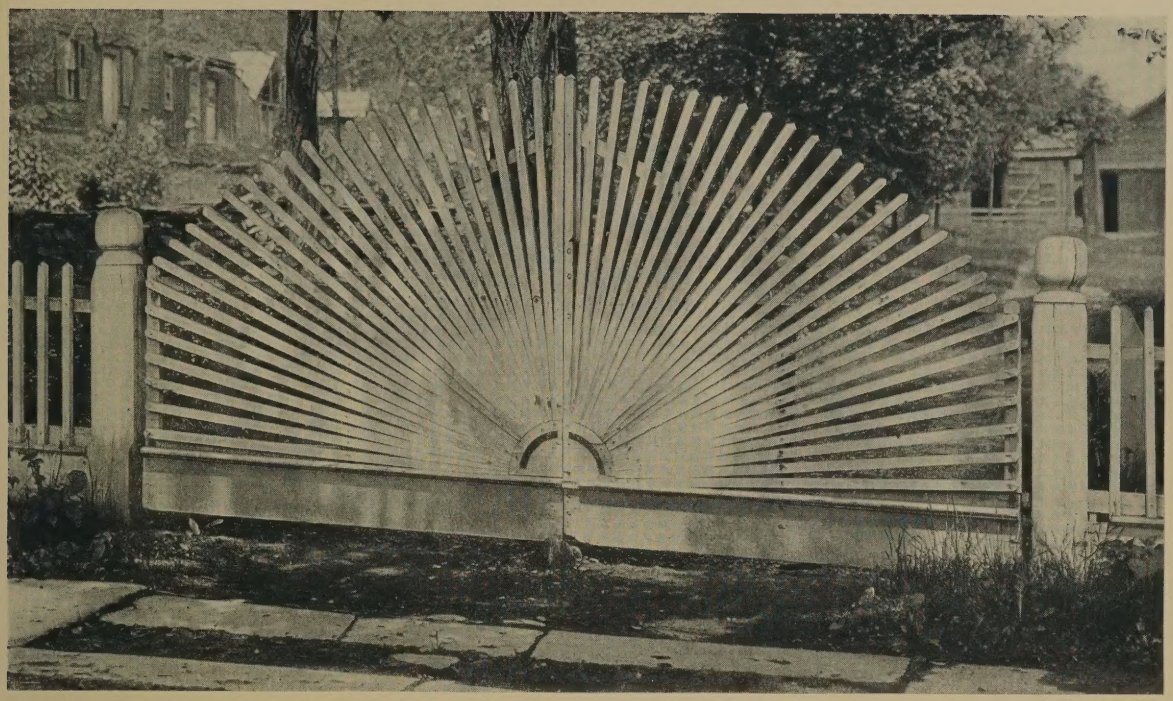
THE GENERAL MOULTON HOUSE, HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE



Photograph by W. King Covell

Detail of Overmantel in Front Room

THE AMANDA GREENE HOUSE, BRIDGE STREET, NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND



The "Peacock" Gate at Rensselaerville, New York

Valediction and Felicitation

By George F. Lindsay

Chairman *The White Pine Bureau*

This is the fifty-sixth issue of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs*—the end of our tenth year as sponsors of this publication. With this number the White Pine Bureau, representing the Northern Pine Manufacturers Association of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan and The Associated White Pine Manufacturers of Idaho will cease its advertising. The White Pine Bureau was formed in 1915 to carry on an advertising campaign, its work being supported by an assessment on the production of the various White Pine lumber mills constituting the Bureau membership. The decision to discontinue this joint advertising is not prompted by any shortage of white pine—the mills are producing at capacity—but by a desire to carry on their publicity as individual organizations.

The White Pine Bureau has considered it a duty and a privilege to inform the architectural profession, through this publication and from its headquarters in Saint Paul, Minnesota, that real white pine is still available. They have been doing everything in their power to assist the architect to get white pine when and where it was wanted. The Bureau will continue to maintain their Service office in Saint Paul, for this purpose.

The value and importance of having the architect an enthusiastic advocate and user of white pine is fully realized. Each year the architect is becoming more and more a factor in the activities of every community. His talent and building knowledge are being used by a constantly increasing number of people in their building operations.

The White Pine Bureau desired the attention of the architect and sought to gain it by means of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs*. This unique publication did not bank alone upon finding its way into the architect's hand but has endeavored to make itself attractive enough to cleave an open way to his mind. *The Monograph Series*, we feel sure, have secured and held the interest of the profession by talking of the things in which their audience was already interested. The mistake was not made of talking too much about the producers of White Pine and the material from the producers own point of view. White Pine is not a *new* or untried building material. Its

qualities are proven and known to the architect. Our effort has been directed therefore to reminding our readers, every other month, of its availability and at the same time offering suggestions for the architectural uses of White Pine.

In the beginning *The White Pine Series* were sent to architects within the consuming territory of white pine and the edition was approximately 5500 copies. Today it is requested by 9820 architects and architectural designers throughout the United States as well as by thousands of libraries, historians, connoisseurs, contractors, home builders, etc. The fundamental principles of direct advertising, *vs.* arousing interest, holding attention, creating desire and stimulating action, have been uppermost in our minds in the conduct of *The White Pine Series*. We have sought these results for the product we were exploiting and we have succeeded. Our ambition to accomplish these ends for white pine has aroused a new interest in Early American Architecture, held the attention of the architects by showing them beautiful pictures of our native architecture, and created a desire upon the part of the architect to know more about our Colonial buildings. The rapidly increasing number of better designed wood-built houses all over the country is evidence that there has been action as well as desire.

Much of the success of *The White Pine Series* has been due to the able and enthusiastic work of Russell F. Whitehead who as Editor and Publisher has put his heart and energy into this periodical since its inception. We realized from the first that Mr. Whitehead was particularly well equipped to conduct the magazine, but we have had an evergrowing respect for his ability, as year after year we have seen the interest and value of the publication increase to its readers and to us. In the enthusiasm of a new undertaking it is not difficult to get an immediate favorable reaction, but as the newness wears off it is difficult to sustain the first interest and rarely is it the privilege of a periodical, over the years, to not only hold this interest but to have it increase tremendously.

So it is with genuine pleasure we are privileged to announce that *The White Pine Series* will be continued by Mr. Russell F. Whitehead as a personal venture. We feel sure that Mr. Whitehead will have the support of all the present readers of this journal and that he will be able to build up a much larger circulation than has been warranted by the gratuitous distribution under our Sponsorship.

Mr. Whitehead in carrying on his work will endeavor to make the publication ever more useful to you, both aesthetically and from the practical point of view. He sees a real need for a new standard of efficiency in the use of lumber and he feels that the profession would welcome a comprehensive study of the various woods and their uses.

Choosing the right wood is a problem which confronts the architect today. With so many different woods on the market with so many exacting requirements to be met and with so little definite information available on the specific qualities and combinations of qualities of the woods offered for sale, there is little wonder that many mistakes have been made—unintentional but costly ones which, in some measure have reflected damagingly upon lumber in general. Lumbermen are realizing that the thoughtless practice of selling any wood for all purposes no longer meets the modern standard of buying—a standard based not primarily on first cost but upon service and ultimate economy.

To have Mr. Whitehead want to take over *The White Pine Series* and to make its success and his go hand in hand, pleases us beyond words. We sincerely trust that the architectural profession will back him up in his confidence that there is a definite place and need for this journal in the field of architectural publications.

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